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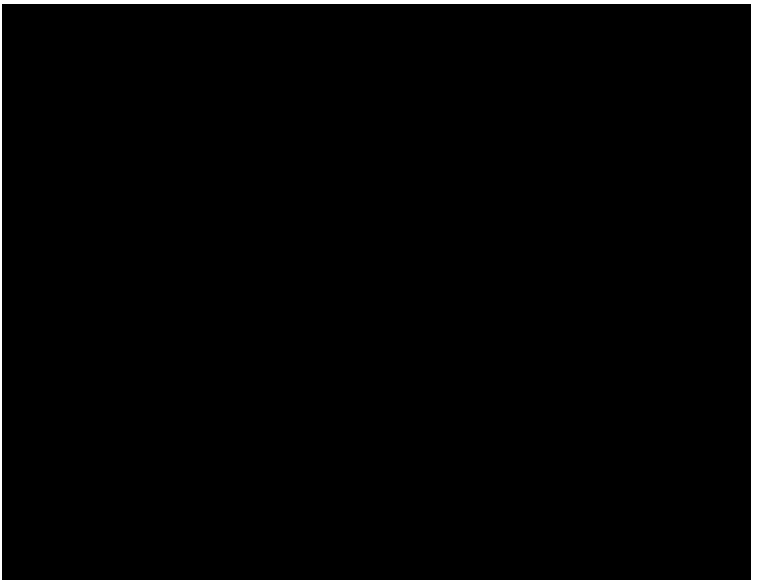
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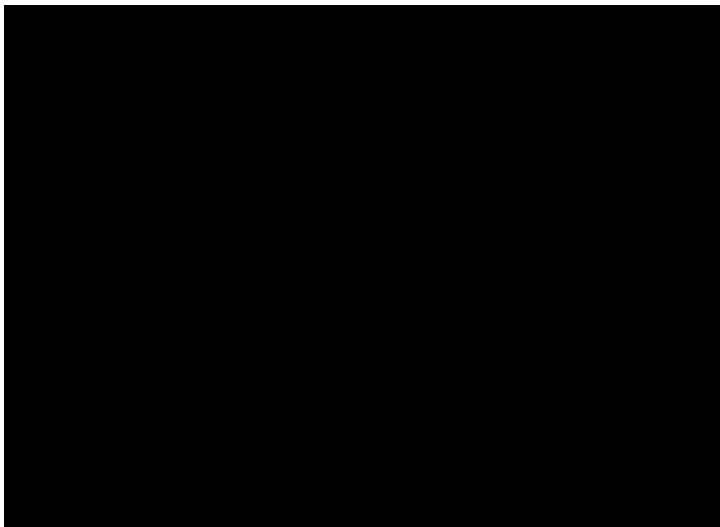
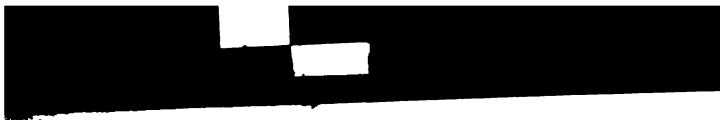
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THE BIVOUAC;

OR

STORIES OF THE PENINSULAR WAR.

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THE
B I V O U A C;
OR
STORIES OF
THE PENINSULAR WAR.

BY W. H. MAXWELL,

AUTHOR OF

"STORIES OF WATERLOO," "WILD SPORTS OF THE WEST," &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

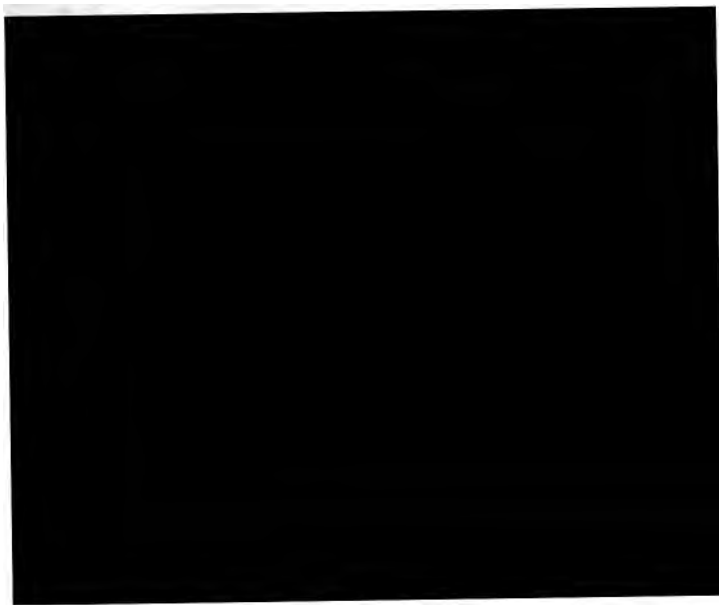
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THE BIVOUAC.

THE VILLAGE—THE GIPSY—AND THE ROUT.

How often have I paused on every charm,
The shelter'd cot, the cultivated farm,
The never-failing brook, the busy mill,
The decent church that topp'd the neighb'ring hill.
GOLDSMITH.



THE BIVOUAC.

CHAPTER I.

THE VILLAGE—THE GIPSY—AND THE ROUT.

“SWEET village! I must leave thee soon”—
exclaimed a tall military personage, as he laid
aside the newspaper, in which the immediate
embarkation of reinforcements for the Penin-
sula was announced. “I must exchange thy
quietude for fields of blood. Well—’tis for the
better—a longer stay would but endanger my
own happiness, and peril that of another al-
ready far too dear. Would that the parting

words were spoken, and the broad sea rolled once more between us !”

He sighed heavily as he approached the window, and looked out upon the village street. It was, indeed, a peaceful and a lovely scene. The neat and snow-white cottages, trellised with jasmine and roses, peeped from the shading of the full-grown sycamores that overspread their roofs ; while the pointed steeple of the church, overtopping the foliage of the trees, displayed its ancient weathercock. Under the open casement of “The Greyhound,” some rustics were

the fixed and melancholy look of the stranger was directed, as abstractedly he thus gave utterance to his thoughts :

“ Yes, Mary ; we might have been happy had fate permitted it. I would have sacrificed the field of glory for the home of love. Hand in hand, we would have passed through life together ; and the tranquil enjoyment of domestic felicity would have amply compensated the wild excitement that attends a martial career. Pshaw ! this is dreaming ; rouse thyself—here comes the harbinger of war !”

As he spoke, a light dragoon rode forward at a brisk trot, and pulling up at the door of the Greyhound, held a brief colloquy with the orderly in attendance, to whom he surrendered his bridle. The clattering of a steel scabbard on the brick pavement of the corridor, announced his approach to the chamber of the commandant ; next moment he was in the presence, and delivered a sealed despatch, marked “ Private.”

Its contents were brief and important; an intimation that the detached companies of the —th might expect an immediate rout for Portsmouth, to join the battalions in Spain, and the peaceful village of Ashfield would be exchanged for cantonments on the Douro.

“Ay, it is what I anticipated,” said the tall soldier, after he dismissed the dragoon, and gave the despatch a hurried perusal. “But a few hours more, and thou and I, Mary, will be as if we never met!” For a minute he paced the apartment in deep thought, then seizing his

and before he had taken a second turn in the church avenue, two personages approached and joined him.

The taller, and elder of the twain, was a man remarkable for his personal advantages. His features were strikingly handsome, and regular almost to effeminacy; his figure slight and graceful, with that air of nameless elegance, which is rarely found but in the foremost ranks of fashion. Nothing could surpass the polish of his manner, the insinuation of his address; and a cursory observation would tell why Captain Phillips had been reputed an object of envy with one sex, and a dangerous acquaintance for the other.

His companion was a mere boy, who had scarcely numbered sixteen summers, and appeared far too young and inexperienced to encounter the vicissitudes of the dangerous profession he had selected. He had lately quitted a peaceful home to join the detachment at Ashfield, and full of boyish hope, little sus-

pected the trying ordeal that was so soon awaiting him in another land.

“ You have had a despatch,” said the handsome captain.

The major bowed his assent.

“ We are all dying to know what its contents were,” continued the inquirer.

“ I regret it exceedingly, as I fear your curiosity must for some time remain ungratified. But do not permit suspense to prove fatal. Possibly the next post may solve the mystery.”

“ Then it was a private communication ?”

“If we do change quarters,” said the young ensign, “I hope it may be for service. Summer is coming, and a campaign will be delightful. How pleasant, after a long march, to sleep on the flowery banks of a mountain river, or beneath the rich blossoms of the orange-tree; and when the battle’s ended, bivouac in a vineyard, or be cantoned among rosy monks, and dark-eyed nuns!”

The elder soldier regarded his youthful comrade with a melancholy smile. “Such, then,” he said, “are thy notions of campaigning! I remember when mine were as vivid, and about as accurate, as yours. Dream on, boy! A short time will show how like to reality is the picture your fancy has sketched of war.”

They had approached within a few paces of the churchyard, when a female unclosed the wicket that opened on the shaded avenue, and suddenly confronted them.

“It is that cursed gipsy!” exclaimed Captain Phillips, evidently annoyed at her

proximity. "I hate to meet the jade. I but brushed her lightly with my cane, to free myself from her impertinence in the forest, and ever since she regards me when I pass her, as a surly mastiff scowls at a ragged beggarman."

"I am ignorant," returned the major, "of the mode by which I conciliated her favour; but my 'good morrow' is acknowledged with a smile, and when we part I am rewarded with a hearty benison. She is a strange person after all. In the only colloquy I had the honour of holding with her on the common, from some loose hints

now is the time. The gipsy for a few shillings will unclosethe book of fate—tell you what the stars ordain—inform you of the colour of your true love's eyes—and prognosticate the very day on which you shall be gazetted a major-general."

As he spoke they approached the woman, who had advanced a step or two to meet them. Her appearance was very remarkable. Just at the noon of life, and with a tendency to become corpulent, her face retained its freshness, and her figure its accurate proportions. Handsome as the females of that singular community are generally reputed, Ellen—for so she named herself—must, a few years before, have been pre-eminently so. The lustrous darkness of her eyes—the marked intelligence of her countenance, united to the sweetest smile imaginable, had once made her beauty irresistible. She accosted O'Connor with kindness; carelessly addressed his young companion; then turning a searching glance at Phillips, measured him from head to foot

with a look in which hatred and scorn were combined.

“ Ellen,” said the major, addressing her, “ we would have our fortunes told. I presume that I must lead the way ”—and taking some silver loosely from his pocket, he presented his offering to the gipsy.

She received the largess graciously.

“ Ay,” she said, “ bold and generous as a soldier should be—a stout heart and open hand. But, stop: the fated hour of your fortune is not yet come—another day will rule your destiny.

The gipsy answered him with a deadly glance.

“’Tis false as himself, major. All morning I have been absent from the village, and, until this moment, knew not that an express had been received.” Then, turning to Captain Phillips, she continued, “You call me an impostor, and laugh my art to scorn. Will you have the future told? The past, I know you dare not listen to.”

“Dare not! woman.”

“Ay, *dare not!* Well—let that bide. Now for the future. Your hand.”

Phillips hesitated. The gipsy’s request was annoying, and yet he was ashamed to refuse it. He saw that O’Connor’s curiosity was raised, and that his young companion was laughing at his embarrassment. With a forced effort he took a piece of money from his purse, and presented his oblation to the sibyl. She took it suspiciously, held it for a moment at a distance, and then flung it scornfully on the ground.

“I would not keep it,” she exclaimed, “were

it the reddest ore on which a king's image was ever stamped! Evil luck attends the gift of him predestined to evil fortune. Give me your hand, and remember what I tell you. You shall know the worst, but the knowledge shall not avert the mischief."

His companions looked on with mingled curiosity and surprise; but Phillips became pale as ashes, while the flashing eyes and heightened colour of the gipsy bespoke, on her part, an unusual excitement.

"'Tis all plain palmistry," she continued.

“ Death ! ” she replied, in a low, hollow voice ;
“ a sudden and a bloody end ! ”

“ Well, after all,” said the young subaltern,
“ it is but the soldier’s fate.”

“ No ! ” replied the gipsy, sharply, as she suddenly caught the boy’s hand in hers. “ See there ! That is the symbol of death upon a battle-field. Poor youth ! I must not look again ; I would not damp thy spirit. Alas ! ere winter strips the trees, a manly breast will mourn in silence, and a mother’s wail be heard for her dead boy ! ”

There was a pause. Phillips, with assumed indifference, broke it by inquiring, “ What was the fate she predicted him ? ”

Casting his hand away, the gipsy looked him steadily in the face, and in a deep tone replied,
“ A felon’s ! ”

“ A felon’s ! ” he shouted. “ Now, by Heaven, were you not a woman, this whip should repay your impertinence.”

“ Then would the prophecy be the more quickly

fulfilled," she replied, thrusting her hand within her cloak, and producing a short poniard. "Farewell, gentlemen. Every tittle I have told shall be accomplished. You and I, Major O'Connor, shall meet ere long." Then turning to Phillips—"Mark my words, and remember them in your parting agony. For the mischief you are doomed to work—quick, deep, and deadly, shall be the retribution."

She waved her hand, flung the wicket to, as if she wished to tear it from the hinges, turned down a cross walk leading to the forest, and was

officer, turned down the avenue, leaving O'Connor to enjoy a solitary walk if he desired it.

The major's stroll, however, was quickly terminated. The winding of a horn was heard, and the postman's horse clattered over the gravelled causeway. The hour was come when the truth of a portion of the gipsy's prophecy would be tested, and O'Connor directed his steps to the domicile of Miss Burnett, who discharged the double duty of furnishing the villagers of Ashfield with the latest news and newest fashions.

The shop of a smart milliner has always been the favourite lounge of gentlemen of the sword, when abiding in country quarters; and Miss Burnett was pretty and *piquante*. She was busily engaged with a fair customer, when the mail arrived. The contents of the bag were quickly spread beside the ribbon-box; and the particulars of the village correspondence might be easily collected from the passing observations of the handsome postmistress.

“ One, two, three. Bless me! Only seven

letters—one for the vicar, another for the apothecary, three for Major O'Connor, and two for Captain Phillips. I positively believe that wicked captain receives none but *billets-doux*. See, these are written on perfumed paper, with French mottos on their seals. I have never remarked any coming to Major O'Connor. Is it not a strange thing, Miss Jones? But here he comes, and a noble-looking fellow he is; were I a lady, I should prefer him to Captain Phillips, handsome as he certainly is."

but his teeth and eyes would have redeemed a plainer face, for both were beautiful. His voice was full-toned, and sweetly modulated, with an accent just sufficiently marked, to intimate that the Emerald Isle was the place of his nativity.

A hasty glance at the envelope of the official letter presented to him by the fair milliner, informed the gallant major that the rout was come, with an order to march for Portsmouth on the third morning. Having despatched the important packet to the acting adjutant, O'Connor proceeded to examine the remainder of his epistles ; but before he had perused his first letter, Phillips and the young soldier entered Miss Burnett's shop.

"The news, major?" was the captain's hurried inquiry, as he directed a careless glance at the seals upon his billets.

"Is briefly told"—was the reply ; "I have despatched *the rout* to the adjutant."

"Good God ! Where for—and when ?" and the captain's agitation was quite apparent.

“ We march on Thursday—our destination Portsmouth”—returned the major calmly.

“ Then we are for the Peninsula ?”

“ Assuredly we are,” responded the commanding officer.

“ How unfortunate !” ejaculated the captain.

“ Unfortunate we should have been, had we been overlooked”—replied Major O'Connor.

“ You, and this silly boy may think so ; but, 'pon my life ! I have no fancy for trudging over the wide world in what old people called a marching regiment.”

detachment under order for the Peninsula ! What will the world say ? Do consider well, before you take a step that must for ever compromise your honour as a soldier."

The handsome captain listened impatiently to the friendly remonstrance of his companion—his features betrayed vexation—and it was evident that there was a mental struggle which was extremely painful for the time. It was however short—as with a passionate exclamation he said, " No, no—it is utterly impossible ! I would not leave England at this moment, to win a marshal's baton. Have I your leave, O'Connor ? I shall be back to-morrow evening."

The commanding officer bowed a cold affirmative ; and mortified at the conduct of his companion, turned to the door, and broke the seal of a letter that still remained unopened. " Surely, it cannot be cowardice !" he muttered. " No, no ; it must be madness. His reputation will be ruined for ever ! By Heaven ! if I know myself, there is no earthly consideration but *one*

that could induce me to hold back from embarkation, or do the act that Phillips seems determined on !”

The *marchande de modes* and young ensign had listened in silence to the brief colloquy. Phillips, although wounded at the major's remonstrance, which imputed much more than the words exactly conveyed, assumed that simulated indifference, with which men of the world often mask from observation feelings which they wish to conceal, and busied himself in selecting gloves from a parcel. O'Connor calmly read the

curled up his lip sarcastically, "these Irish are blessed with an interminable relationship; and the fatal despatch merely announces the demise of some fiftieth cousin. Has Mary Howard been in town this morning?"

"Oh, no, poor girl! she little suspects how soon she shall lose the major and yourself," returned Miss Burnett.

"O'Connor seems touched in that quarter. Don't you think so, pretty one?" inquired the captain, carelessly.

"Yes," she replied. "Few look on Miss Howard with impunity. There are others beside the major, who may leave their hearts behind," and she looked archly at the lady-killer.

"Ah, the girl's passable. Well enough for a country beauty, certainly. Come, Tom, you must do some little matters for me in my absence, as our 'séjour' is rather limited. *Addio, mia bella*—till to-morrow, I kiss your hands."

Passing his arm through that of his youthful companion, he gracefully saluted the mar-

chande de modes, and headed towards "The Greyhound," to order post-horses for the metropolis.

The pretty milliner looked after him as he walked down the village street.

"He is more than handsome," she muttered; "and yet one honest smile from that dashing major were worth all his heartless homage. I marked them both. How differently was a summons for the field received! One eye brightened, while the other quailed. O'Connor, one whisper of regard from thee would win my



**THE FOREST AND THE FORTUNE-
TELLER.**

Pacing the forest,
Chewing the food of sweet and bitter fancy.
SHAKSPEARE.

Down in the valley come meet me to-night,
And I'll tell you your fortune truly.
MOORE.



CHAPTER II.

THE FOREST AND THE FORTUNE-TELLER.

EDWARD O'CONNOR was an orphan from the cradle. His father was killed early in the revolutionary war, and his mother survived her husband but a twelvemonth. Thrown upon the world helpless and unprotected, the infant was abandoned by every relation but a maiden aunt. She nursed him tenderly, and he grew up a stout and manly boy. In compliment to his father's memory, he was presented with an ensigncy at fifteen. Fortune smiled upon him, for his daring spirit placed him in her path. Years rolled on, and O'Connor returned to his fatherland with a majority.

From the neglect of his relations, the young soldier held intercourse with none of them, save her who had proved his protector. His boyhood had passed away unnoticed, and his existence was only ascertained by his name being continued in the army-list. But when that name was honourably mentioned in the affair of Lugo; when after being wounded at Talavera and Busaco, his fortune carried him safely through the breach of Badajoz, the leader of a forlorn hope, and his gallantry was rewarded with pro-

had opened in Miss Burnett's shop announced that an inheritance of two thousand pounds a year was his.

When O'Connor cleared the village, he struck into one of the numerous paths that intersected the low brushwood, with which the forest was overgrown. A fine spring evening was closing in, and the silence of the hour was only broken by the twittering of birds, and the more distant tinkle of the sheep-bells. It was a place and time fitted for a lover's meditations; and as the soldier pursued his solitary walk—no object disturbed the eye, no sound dispelled his musing—deeper and deeper he involved himself among the tangled underwood, until the baying of a dog roughly dispelled his reveries, and a light stream of curling smoke, eddying over the foliage of the copse, intimated to the wanderer, that "something living" was in his immediate vicinity.

The path had gradually narrowed until the hazel-boughs united with each other, and almost

barred a further progress. Voices were more distinctly heard, and the dog's bark became louder and more impatient. O'Connor pushed the branches aside, and emerged suddenly from the thicket. A forest glade lay before him; and on its green and level sward, he discovered a group of gipsies preparing their evening meal.

A sweeter spot could not have been selected than that on which the wanderers were encamped. Belted by a close and almost impervious thicket, the gipsy bivouac was difficult of approach,

owners of Q'Connor's approach, advanced boldly to the opening of the thicket, as if determined to withstand the entrance of a stranger.

A low and peculiar whistle at once recalled the dog, and a dark and keen-looking man civilly requested the soldier to "come forward to the fire." The invitation was accepted. A girl of uncommon beauty instantly arranged a turf seat; the soldier joined the group, and found himself in the centre of the wild community, an object of curiosity to all.

"It grows duskish," said the old man. "Probably you have strayed from the forest road?"

"Indeed I have," replied the soldier, "and I must require some assistance from you, to enable me to recover my way."

"You walk late, sir," said the gipsy.

"Yes—I was wandering in the woods, and accident conducted me to your bivouac—a lovelier glade to encamp on those could not desire, 'under the greenwood tree who love to lie.' Is this your favourite retreat?"

"No—we are sometimes here; but we have other haunts as sheltered and remote as this one."

"Yours is a pleasant and a careless life," pursued the soldier.

"Ay," said the old man, "when leaves are green, and birds are singing, the copse and hedge-row are merrier than the town. Seasons will change, and boughs grow bare; and you, who have never known an unsheltered head at midnight, would then own the comfort of a roof, no matter how low the walls were which it covered."

“And has he never known a wet sward and starry sky?” she exclaimed, in answer to the old man’s observation. “Fool!” she continued, “often has the night-wind moaned over him as he lay upon the ground, where none could tell the living from the dead.”

O’Connor started and looked up, while the gipsy scrutinized his features. “Yes,” she continued, “all is written there—the past, the present, and the future. Speak—shall I tell of battle-fields—or turn from war to love, and name a name far dearer to your ear, than ever was the maddening cry of victory?”

“You know me then?” said the soldier.

The gipsy bowed her head slightly.

“What you told me in the churchyard avenue has happened; a strange and unexpected turn of fortune has befallen me.”

“Yes; I could not be mistaken. I know the past—I see the present—and I can foretel what the future must be. Come, sir, I would speak

with you apart—follow me—for I have that to say which requires a private hearing.”

She lifted a billet from the fire, while O'Connor rose from the turf, and accompanied her to the extremity of the glade, where a projecting clump of copsewood concealed them from the observation of the gipsy bivouac. His dark companion took the soldier's hand, and by the flickering light of the firebrand, examined its lines attentively.

“Enough,” she said. “Two hours since I

the past, ere I unfold what yet lies in the womb of time? ”

“ If you please, Ellen,” returned the soldier, struck with the imposing solemnity of the gipsy’s manner, while once more he submitted his hand to her inspection.

“ All is distinct and legible—the beginning and the end alike—a red cradle and a red grave—one parent weltering on a bloody field—the other filling an early tomb.” She turned her sparkling eyes upon the listener, and asked him, “ was it so ? ”

“ You are indeed right, Ellen,” replied the major; “ but this disclosure is no proof of second sight—my orphanage, and its attendant circumstances, are generally known.”

The gipsy proceeded without noticing his observation.

“ Nursed by a fair woman, the child became a boy—and the boy would be a soldier. He crossed the ocean wave—and before the dawn blackened on his cheek, heard the roar of battle

beneath the burning skies of Egypt. Years passed, and the boy ripened into manhood. Again I see him on the field of death—no longer with the advancing step of victory, but struggling on a broken bridge, among the last combatants of a retreating army. The scene has changed anew—on a green hill, encircled by vineyards and cork-trees, two hosts are striving for the heights. Where is the soldier now? Bleeding on the ground, while a woman hangs over him like a mother, and recalls him back to life!”

ended; darkness and silence had succeeded; and, wearied with noise and blood, the contending foes had sunk to rest. Rest! Ay, such as that unearthly calm which precedes a tropic hurricane! Hush!—"Tis the measured tramp of massive columns, moving silently towards yon broken wall. They approach the breach unnoticed and unassailed; not a bugle sounds; not a musket betrays the midnight advance. Another minute of harrowing silence—and the volcano bursts! Rockets and blue lights flare across the murky sky—cannons roar—shells hiss—and cheers, and yells, and curses, add their infernal accompaniment. The forlorn hope are struggling through the ditch—a shower of death reigns round them, and the breach is choked with corpses. Again, and again, the assailants mount the ruins, mown down in hundreds by the withering fire of a hidden enemy, or empaled upon the bayonets of their comrades. Where is the soldier now?—Mark yon remote rampart which a daring band has carried by escalade! There—pressing

on the retiring French ; there—cheering on his desperate followers ; *there*—is the soldier—while the wild cheers of his companions, rising above the hellish din of battle, proclaim the fall of Badajoz ! Is the tale true ?”

“ *True!*” exclaimed the soldier, as his kindling eye and outstretched arm showed the excitement which the gipsy’s vivid painting had aroused. “ True ! it is witchery—every event from childhood—my whole career displayed as in a mirror—my parents’ death—the fight of Alexandria—the pass of Lugo—the plains of Tala-

Astorga—imagine a pressing enemy—roads, almost impassable from tempestuous weather, and the multitudes that broke up their surface—rain, and snow, and storm—no fire to warm—no roof to shelter—and say, would not these united miseries overcome the endurance of the boldest soldier? Then fancy a deserted woman, cumbered with a sickly child, and loaded with booty for which she had perilled the dangers of a battle-field, and which she now wanted resolution to abandon—what would be the chances of escape? The winter blast was howling mournfully, and night set in—the British, harassed by a long march, were halted for the night on a bare hill-side, that afforded but little shelter from the piercing east wind. The last of the retiring soldiery had crossed a wooden bridge, which a young officer and part of the rear-guard were directed to cut down, to place the flooded river between the retreating troops and their pursuers. The work of destruction was rapid—the last planks were tearing from the beam that sup-

ported them, when a wretched follower of the camp, urged on a weary and overladen mule. The French light troops were already pressing down the hill—and, in another minute, she must have been exposed to plunder, and probably some nameless insult. She reached the river bank—she called, by his own hopes of mercy, for pity from the soldier—but he laboured on. Another blow or two, and the plank would have fallen—another minute, and the enemy be up. Desperately that helpless and devoted wretch prayed in her child's name for succour. It was

it up. 'Fear nothing!' he said, 'The act was mine, and on me be the consequences. Fall back, men!' They obeyed, and found shelter behind a copse, from the spattering of the French advance—all were safe except the gallant youth who had saved the deserted woman. He stood alone, and his blows fell quick as lightning on the fragment of the woodwork. 'Run,' cried a soldier; 'run, sir, or you are a prisoner!' But next moment, a splash in the water told that the destruction of the bridge was completed; and unhurt, the bold commander of the rear-guard effected his escape, amid the cheering of his comrades.—Is there any passage of your life that in aught resembles this scene?"

The soldier had listened with deep interest.

"Yes," he replied, "I remember a similar occurrence.—Pshaw! after all it was a trifle;—and who, for the chances of a random shot or two, would abandon a woman who had asked assistance?"

“ You knew her, of course ?” said the gipsy.

“ No—I never saw her before, and never met her afterwards.”

“ Indeed !—Methinks that gratitude should have obliged that woman to have sought her deliverer.—Listen. War continued ; and under another and more fortunate leader, the young soldier was again engaged. From the heights of Busaco, he viewed a sight that would almost gladden a coward’s heart. It was the evening before the battle. Far as the eye could

and rolling slowly upwards, announced to its defenders, that the storm of war was coming. The broken surface of the mountain became the scene of numerous combats; but though outnumbered far, the British kept their vantage-ground, and repulsed the attempts upon their left. On the right, an accidental success led to a bloodier encounter. Covered by the smoke, the French light troops swarmed over the face of the Sierra, and gained the summit of the ridge; while a mass of infantry, following the voltigeurs in close column, struggled up the heights, and nearly reached the table-land. This was the crisis of the day. An English brigade, couched behind the hill for shelter from the cannonade, suddenly sprang up and met them. One close and shattering volley arrested the French advance. Vainly their leaders rushed to the front, waved their schakos above their heads, and shouted "Forward!" Just then a rush was heard—a wild hurrah rose above the thunder of the cannonade. The smoke parted—and glancing in the

bright sunshine, the British line were seen advancing to the charge. The French delivered a feeble volley, recoiled, wavered, broke, and ran down the hill, leaving the Sierra in the possession of the conquerors. Where was the soldier then? Extended on the ground, faint and bleeding—a woman's arm supported his drooping head—a woman's hand moistened his parched lips—and though the face of the heights was ploughed by shot and shells, she never left him for a moment, until a fatigue party of his own regiment carried him to the rear."

“And have you never seen that countenance save on the hill of Busaco?”

“Never!” said the soldier.

“Was she your countrywoman?” inquired the gipsy.

“Even that I cannot tell. I should say not. Her cheek was swarthy—her hair black as the raven’s wing—her air and look foreign.”

“Surely you have often met features that would recal her memory?”

“I may,” replied the soldier; “but I did not particularly remark them.”

“And would you still wish to meet that dark woman?” she inquired sharply.

“I should indeed.”

“Look then on *me!* she whom you saved at Lugo is before you—and the same hand that on the mountain-ridge of Busaco held the wine-flask to your lips, now grasps yours!”

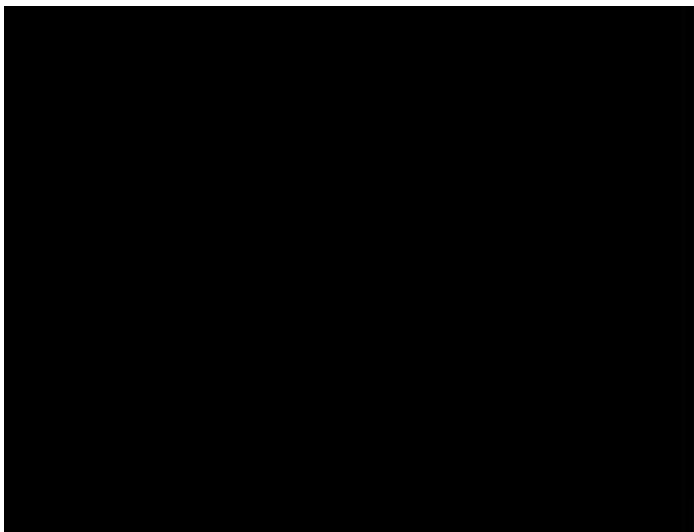
“Heavens! am I dreaming?” exclaimed the soldier. “It is the same dark eye—it is the same brown cheek!”

“Attend to me,” said the gipsy: “it is now past sunset, and three hours hence the village will be quiet. When the clock strikes ten, meet me under the lime-tree in the centre of the churchyard. There we shall be safe from interruption.—Has Major O’Connor any objection to the place and hour?”

The soldier smiled.

“Death and I,” he said, “are, as you know, old acquaintances; and I shall not be reckoned an intruder on his domain.—At ten, Ellen, I shall be waiting at the lime-tree.”

the openings in the coppice. Presently the light vanished—the hum of voices died away—nothing indicated the proximity of the gipsy cantonment; and apparently, the only wanderers on the forest were the soldier and his handsome guide.





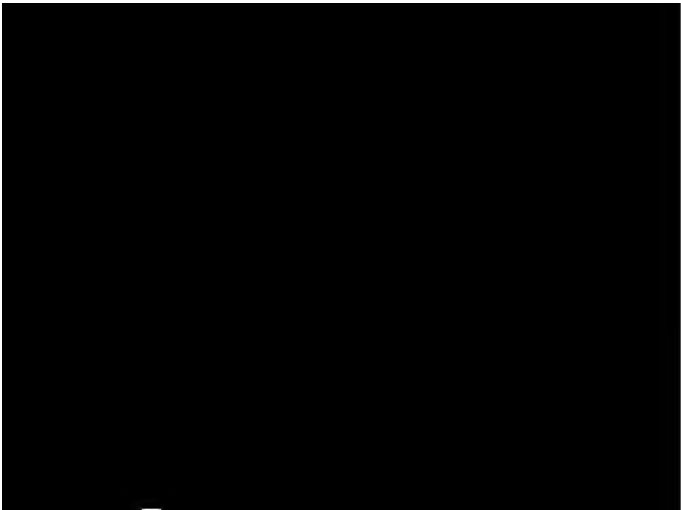
THE REJECTION.

Alas, poor Romeo, he is already dead!
Stabbed with a white wench's black eye.

SHAKESPEARE.

My hand met hers with trembling touch ;
'Twas the first time I dared so much,
And yet she chid not.

MOORE.



CHAPTER III.

THE REJECTION.

FOR a quarter of an hour O'Connor accompanied the young Gipsy through a succession of glades and thickets, which, in the gloom of evening, would have been impracticable to a stranger. To Rosa, however, the difficulties of the forest appeared familiar, and she led the way at a quick pace, until the last clump of underwood was cleared, and the sparkling lattices of the village were seen at the distance of a mile. Receiving the soldier's gratuity with a curtesy, his pretty guide bade him a kind good night, entered the copse again, and left O'Connor to pursue his way in solitude.

His late interview with the strange female, whom he had so unexpectedly encountered, had left a deep impression. How any person could have been so intimately acquainted with every incident of a military life, passed chiefly in a foreign land, was unaccountable; and that that person was a woman, enhanced the mystery. At present the thing was inexplicable, and he determined to control his curiosity until the hour of meeting came. The effort was successful; and, in a short time, the gentle object that had occupied his bosom when he entered the forest, again

Howard has a heart to give? That question must be speedily determined. I can no longer bear suspense, and endure the torment of uncertainty. This hour should end it. Should? *It shall.* The trial must be made—and on Mary's decision my future course shall hinge."

Without entering the village street, O'Connor turned into a green lane that led directly to the parsonage. The moon was just rising—and as she topped the dark foliage of the lofty chestnuts, flung a silvery light upon the white building they overhung. He paused, and leaning against a close-cut hedge, which separated the flower knot from the paddock, silently examined the dwelling of his mistress. All around bespoke an humble but happy home—all around was peaceful, calm, and tranquillizing. The lofty poplars flung their lengthened shadows across the turf, while many a shrub and creeper exhaled, in the dew of evening, a fresh and grateful perfume. A glare, redder than the moonbeams, flashed from an open lattice on the green parterre. In that lighted room the lady of his love was sitting.

O'Connor sprang over the enclosure—a few steps more—and Mary Howard was before him!

Concealed by a full-grown myrtle, the soldier gazed in silence on her whose fiat was presently to decide the character of his after life. She was the sole occupant of the apartment, and, unconscious that she was observed, seemed wrapped in deep and painful meditation. One glance at her intelligent eyes betrayed mental inquietude, and more than once a deep sigh escaped her. O'Connor gazed upon the beautiful girl with pleasure mingled with apprehension. A

A rustling noise from the leaves of the myrtle, which an involuntary movement of the soldier occasioned, seemed to dispel Mary's reverie. She turned over the leaves of an open music-book, took up a guitar that was lying on the table, and striking a few chords, sang, in a voice that thrilled through the listener's heart, a ballad that was not unknown to him.

THE HIGHLAND SOLDIER TO HIS MISTRESS.

I.

GIVE me this valley for my home,
The heather for my nightly pillow,
And I will ask no more to roam,
Or brave the field, or dare the billow.
Yes, love, for thee I'll all forego,
With war's red honours cloy'd and weary ;
What bliss can Donald's bosom know
Like thy sweet smiles, my artless Mary.

II.

For me the bugle sounds no more,
Nor drum shall beat its loud alarm ;
Again I seek my native shore,
To shield thee, love, from scaith and harm.
He who has roam'd the world as long,
Will own his wanderings sad and dreary ;
For, oh ! among the tinsell'd throng,
He'll find no heart like thine, sweet Mary !

Before the last sounds of the symphony had died upon the strings, O'Connor stood before the startled musician. A deep blush overspread her countenance, as with mingled feelings of pleasure and surprise, she took his hand and bade him a warm welcome. For some minutes both laboured under evident embarrassment; but the major's self-possession speedily returned, and he placed himself upon the sofa beside the timid girl.

“ Well, Miss Howard, is not this profession of arms a sad one? Just when friendships have been

“It is the fate of war,” said O’Connor, with a forced smile.

“Alas!” returned the fair girl with a sigh, “what a long period may probably elapse before you revisit England.”

“Ay, my dear Miss Howard, and the odds are pretty heavy, that many of us shall never return.”

“It is a fearful thought;” and her pallid cheek and broken voice betrayed her feelings. “This sudden order must have surprised you, major?”

“Not particularly, Miss Howard; I have been frequently moved from quarters before now, even with slighter ceremony.”

“Miss Burnett, who was lately here, mentioned that your letters appeared to be of more than ordinary interest.”

The major smiled: “And did the pretty milliner observe the interest they excited?”

“She did, and feared, from your abrupt de-

parture, that some evil tidings had been communicated."

The soldier sighed: "Alas! Miss Howard, it proves how little the expression of the countenance may be taken as a faithful index of the heart. That letter would be reckoned by most men the harbinger of joy, for it announced that one who stood between me and a fortune was gone."

"Indeed, major!"

"Such indeed was the intelligence that made me oblivious of my parting good-morrow to the

the soldier broke it—" 'Tis late, Miss Howard ; I have stolen upon you unannounced ; am I an intruder ? "

" Oh, no ; I was so lonely when you came in. My father was obliged to visit a sick friend, and his residence being distant, it will be late before he can be home. But for your visit, major, I should have had a long and solitary evening to contend with. How much my father will regret his absence—you are such a favourite."

" Am I, indeed ? "

" *Indeed* you are. I had an only brother. He died before I can remember the event — my father still loves to speak of him ; and from some fancied similarity between you, he imagines that, had his boy lived, he would have been such another as yourself."

The soldier smiled, and Miss Howard continued—

" Pray, when is Captain Phillips expected to return ? "

“ You are aware, I presume, that we are about to lose him ?”

“ No—yes—” and she coloured slightly. “ In fact, Miss Burnett told me something of it.”

“ I regret it on his own account. It is a rash and dangerous experiment.”

“ Might not circumstances, however, justify the step ?” she inquired with considerable animation.

“ None could, Miss Howard. Phillips has already declined the call of duty, and given up a regiment, rather than leave the kingdom. This

heaps her favours on your head, why not seek and secure that tranquil happiness and quiet, which I have heard you say that, in earlier life, you so much longed after?"

While she spoke, a deeper blush overspread her cheeks, and her soft and beaming eyes fell timidly before the ardent glances of her companion.

"Miss Howard," said the soldier, "you have unconsciously touched a chord that awakens the softest—or it would probably be juster to term them the weakest—feelings of a heart not much accustomed to indulge in sentiment. It is true that, hitherto, mine has been a wild career of danger and excitement, and that a fortune more than sufficient to realize every reasonable want or wish has suddenly devolved upon me: yet there exists but one consideration that could induce me to abandon a profession which in boyhood was the object of my pride, and in manhood the hope of my ambition.— Listen to me, Mary!"

It was the first time that name had ever passed his lips. Miss Howard was deeply affected, and O'Connor's faltering tones betrayed emotions too powerful to be concealed. He took her hand, and thus continued—

“ Mary ! I have been from infancy an orphan, and never known the ties of love and kindred, save for one, who now sleeps in the grave. I have been a wanderer on the world. I have had no home whereto I might turn my weary steps—no heart rejoiced for my successes ; and no eye would have wept for me had I fallen. What

There is one for whom my heart beats—there is one whose form is ever before me—one for whom even glory itself would be resigned!” He made a long pause. “Mary! canst thou not read the secret of my heart? Mary—*thou art that one whom I so love and idolize!*”

As O'Connor proceeded, Miss Howard's flushing countenance became more deeply crimsoned. But when he named her name—when he declared her to be the object of his adoration—the roses as rapidly died away, and an unearthly paleness succeeded them.

“Oh God!” she exclaimed, “what a trial is this! Let me collect myself: my thoughts wander—my brain is burning! This is indeed so unexpected!”

He had placed his arm round her, and Mary Howard suffered it to remain.

“O'Connor,” she said, faintly, “if there be on earth one whom I regard with sisterly affection, you are the man. Were I to name him with whom my happiness would be secure, it should

be you. Yet, much as I admire—much as I respect you—much as I esteem a declaration of affection, of which the proudest might be vain—beyond the bond of friendship, no other tie can bind us.”

The soldier by turns grew pale and red —
“ Mary, do I hear you right? I asked you for your heart, and—”

“ Alas ! I have none to give you — mine is already gone — my hand is plighted to another.”

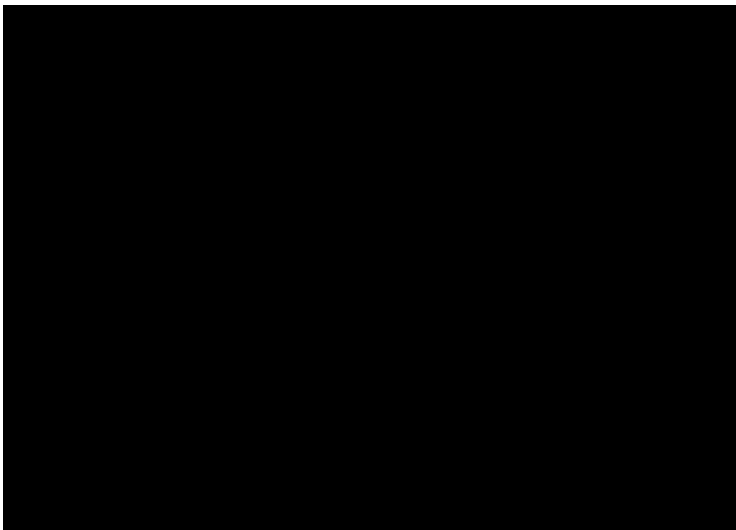
“ Another ? ”

stood with folded arms, and eyes fixed on his lost love. Miss Howard rose, and offered him her hand.

“ O’Connor, will you love me as a brother ? ”

“ As a brother, Mary ? ”

He gazed on her for a few moments with a melancholy look—caught her to his breast, and madly pressed her lips with his. “ Mary, may you be happy, as I am wretched ! ” he said—rushed from the apartment, and bounding across the hedge, Mary Howard was left to weep alone.

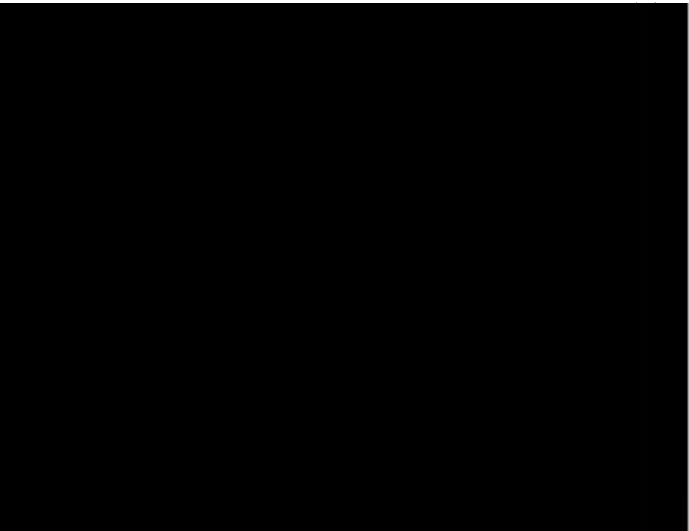




THE CHURCHYARD MEETING.

I cannot prate in puling strain,
Of lady-love and beauty's chain :
If changing cheek and scorching vein,
Lips taught to writhe, but not complain ;
If bursting heart, and madd'ning brain,
And daring deed, and vengeful steel,
And all that I have felt and feel
Betoken love—that love was mine.

THE GIAOUR.



CHAPTER IV.

THE CHURCHYARD MEETING.

IT might seem surprising that one whose character was firm almost to sternness, should feel a rejected suit so deeply as Major O'Connor appeared to do, when he rushed wildly from the parsonage, and again turned his steps towards the outskirts of the forest. It was indeed a moment of exquisite suffering—his fairy fabric overthrown—his cherished hopes blasted in their very infancy. But a few hours since, to part from Mary Howard might have caused him inward pain, but certainly he would have exhibited his customary resolution. Every thing, *then*, prohibited him from loving. He was poor

beating from the tower, crossed the stile of the churchyard, and walked slowly towards the well-known rendezvous.

All around him was silent; the vibrations of the bell gradually died on the night-breeze, and the loneliness of the dwelling of the dead was disturbed by no living thing but himself. Beneath the shadow of the lime-tree a figure was indistinctly seen; it was motionless as the effigies of the departed, and until he had approached within a pace or two, the soldier doubted whether the object on which he looked

to the test, and for the knowledge of what remains I would not give one farthing."

"Indeed, major!"

"Aye, had there been aught to tell, our meeting should have been somewhat earlier."

"Would that it had!" returned the Gipsy; "then would you have been spared the humiliation of a rejection."

O'Connor started back as he passionately exclaimed, "Woman! how comes it that my life, past and present, is open to your view? Scarcely an hour has elapsed, and yet you tell me what occurred when, save myself, there was but another present."

"Yes, major, other eyes were looking on, for I was standing in the orchard. I saw Mary Howard in your arms; I saw you rush madly to the forest; I saw the girl sink on the floor in an agony of tears. What did all this tell? That he whose heart had beaten calmly in the battle-field, knew for the first time the withering pang of unrequited love; and she, when she refused

your hand, felt an ominous conviction that, by that act, she was entailing misery on herself."

"I do not understand you; surely, if she loved another, she was right to refuse her hand, when she had no heart to accompany it."

"She was," she continued mournfully. "Alas, poor girl! she has lavished her love upon a villain—a deep and dangerous villain—and his falsehood will wring her heart.—Did she name him to you?"

"No; she promised to tell me every thing to-morrow."

“ Psha!—I repeat it—it is impossible !” the soldier passionately exclaimed. “ Not three days since, I heard Phillips, after dinner, speak so lightly of her, that I felt some difficulty in restraining my indignation. He talked of woman with profligate levity ; swore that wealth was the only excuse for matrimony ; and declared that nothing besides should ever tempt him to become a husband.”

“ He swore truly for once”—said the Gipsy.

“ If so, why should he pursue Miss Howard ? He would not make her his wife—he dare not dream of her as a mistress.”

“ *Dare not !*” exclaimed the Gipsy. “ What will not a libertine dare ? At this moment he has marked her for destruction.”

“ Oh, it is too monstrous for belief !” replied the soldier. “ None would be wretch enough to contemplate such villany—the destruction of that artless and confiding girl—one so innocent, so beautiful !”

“ Aye ! the more glorious the creature, the

prouder is the boast of humbling its beauties to the dust."

O'Connor's face flushed with rage. "By heaven! if even in thought he wronged her, his blood should answer it.—Hear me," he continued in a low and broken voice, "though to speak it pains me. I loved her, madly loved her, almost before I knew it; poverty placed a barrier between us, and I strove and half succeeded in forgetting. Within the last few hours, wealth became suddenly mine—I flew to Mary Howard and offered her my hand. She heard me with

“ Then beware of Phillips—or Mary Howard’s ruin is decreed.”

With a sudden movement that made the Gipsy start, O’Connor suddenly unsheathed the sabre he had been leaning on—the steel flashed in the moonlight, as he continued in deep and passionate tones—

“ Here, in the face of heaven ! here, surrounded by the dead—him who injures thee, Mary, I denounce ; where he goes, my vengeance shall follow ; and, were it to the verge of hell, I would pursue him, until the stain upon thy honour is washed out in his heart’s blood !” He pressed the blade to his lips, withdrew it slowly, and again replaced it in the scabbard. A long pause ensued—the soldier broke it.

“ You told me, when parting in the forest, that you had something to communicate—”

“ Which your precipitation has rendered of no avail. I suspected your attachment for Miss Howard, and intended to apprise you that a successful rival had already won her love.”

“It was kindly meant ; but are you certain that Phillips is the person for whom I have been rejected ?”

“I am,” replied the Gipsy ; “I saw them meet in the forest, and watched the interview ; a thicket concealed me, while all that passed between them was under my observation. I heard his tale of love ; all that he uttered was believed ; and, in turn, she owned a mutual attachment. I saw his arms around her — I saw their lips meet—”

“Stop, stop !” exclaimed the soldier : “This

of which you spake, that would have wrought a cure."

"You doubt me, then?" said the Gipsy.

"Oh, no! Alas! no room for doubt is left me. God knows how sincerely I loved: why marvel, then, how unwillingly I tear the object from my heart?"

"I have much to speak of. Will you meet me at six to-morrow evening? The place—where Rosa left you."

"I shall be punctual," said the soldier.

"Farewell—your path lies there." And the Gipsy pointed to the stile. "Good night!" And turning into a walk that swept round an angle of the building, she disappeared before he could return the salutation.

O'Connor remained for a short time in the churchyard; the chimes roused him from his musing, and he hastened to the village inn. The Gipsy's advice was not unheeded; a powerful exertion was required, and he determined to make the effort. With assumed indifference he

joined the supper party, who had for some time been expecting him ; and no indications of " blighted love " betrayed his recent disappointment.

The night wore on. At an early hour the major left the joyous group, and strove to sleep, and forget the lost one ; but ominous visions broke his rest, and objects of love and hate were constantly before him. One while, Phillips was at his feet, and the imaginary exertion of withdrawing his sword from the body of his prostrate enemy awoke him. He dreamed



THE RIVAL SUITORS.

“ And she was lost—and yet I breathed,
But not the breath of human life :
A serpent round my heart was wreathed,
And stung my every thought to strife.”

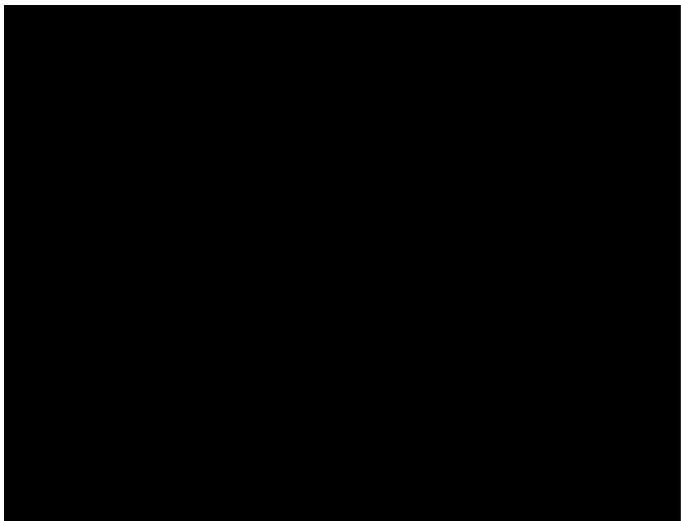
THE GIAOUR.

“ If thou wert honourable,
Thou wouldst have told this tale for virtue, not
For such an end thou seek’st.”

CYMBELINE.

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CHAPTER V.

THE RIVAL SUITORS.

THE morning tête-à-tête between Major O'Connor and Miss Howard was, as it may be imagined, any thing but agreeable. The soldier's firmness was often severely tasked, to enable him without emotion to hear from the woman whom he loved, a confession of attachment for another; while to her, the declaration was embarrassing in the extreme. To the relief of both, the approach of Mr. Howard through the orchard ended this painful interview. Soon after the major took his leave; and Mary retired to weep in her own apartment unobserved.

In declining O'Connor's addresses, there was a presentiment on Mary's mind almost amounting to conviction, that she was then endangering her future peace, and doing an act that would cause her the bitterest regret. The noble qualities of her rejected suitor were justly appreciated; and her better judgment was assured, that in the keeping of the high-spirited soldier, a woman's happiness was safe.

Yet it would have been surprising, if one so artless as the parson's daughter had not been dazzled by the more attractive accomplishments

precluded her from seeing any of the other sex, except the homely youths who inhabited the adjacent farm-houses. To all around her, Mary was a superior being. With brilliant talents and a cultivated understanding, her natural disposition was ardent and romantic. Nevertheless she had hitherto passed through existence "fancy free"—and until, in an evil hour, some rural disturbances occasioned a detachment of the Rifles to be cantoned in the village of Ashfield, Mary had never met an object on whom she could bestow her love.

From the seclusion of the hamlet, the only persons with whom the military held intercourse were the vicar and physician. Mr. Howard was friendly and hospitable; and Mary's beauty induced the officers of the little garrison to be frequent visiters at the parsonage. From the earliest period of their acquaintance, O'Connor was taken with the sweet and artless manner of the handsome villager; while she, who "had read of battles," viewed with girlish admiration one whose

name had been proudly mentioned "where all were brave;" and marvelled to find the lion-hearted soldier mild and unassuming as a school-boy. A closer intimacy must have ended in permanent attachment; but O'Connor's marriage was impracticable, and his high and chivalrous honour obliged him to repress every indication of regard, when prudence forbade him to offer her his hand. Had the slightest indication of affection been offered by the soldier, Mary Howard would have loved him devotedly. A few days more, and fortune would have removed the barrier; but,

selfish and cowardly wretch ;—and the very circumstance which would have deterred any but a villain—that Mary's only relative was a timid and helpless churchman, from whose vengeance a seducer had nothing to apprehend—confirmed him in his unholy designs upon his unsuspecting victim.

He knew his powers well—and hackneyed in those nameless arts which rarely fail to win a woman's heart, Mary was assailed with all the apparent warmth of faithful passion. To see, and hear, and not to love, was impossible. Phillips pursued his advantage with the tact of past experience—in the solitude of the forest, his perjured vows were credited—and Mary Howard, with downcast eyes and blushing cheeks, owned that he had not wooed in vain.

And who was Phillips ? That question were difficult to solve—for a strange mystery was connected with his parentage. His reputed father had held a small appointment in the Treasury — and his mother was a woman of

uncommon beauty, and but indifferent reputation. It was known that the treasury clerk at his death had been in embarrassed circumstances, yet his widow resided in the western suburbs of the metropolis, the mistress of a splendid house and handsome establishment. Phillips had been educated at a fashionable school, and at an early age was placed in a dragoon regiment. He lived expensively, but seemed always in easy circumstances. That he had interest at the Horse Guards was apparent, from his quick promotion to a troop, as well as the facility with which he

officer, had much to occupy his attention ; and the detachment were busy preparing for the march. To regulate his private affairs—a task of some difficulty, occasioned by his recent acquisition of property—O'Connor sedulously applied himself. Before evening parade he had accomplished his arrangements ; and, for the first time, written a testamentary document, which he confided to an old companion, with directions for its being produced, in the event of his falling in the Peninsula.

His friend had just quitted the apartment, when a chaise and four drove to the inn, and, rapidly as it passed the window, O'Connor recognised the traveller to be Phillips. In a few minutes a knock at the door was heard, and the gallant captain was admitted to the presence of his commanding officer.

That two persons so opposite in character and feeling could ever have been on any terms beyond the external civilities of military companionship, would be unnatural. O'Connor de-

spised Phillips for his effeminacy, and with the Irish pride attendant on an honourable descent, looked with contempt on the doubtful history of his parentage, and the more disgraceful patronage from which he derived his influence at the Horse Guards. Phillips, on the other hand, viewed the bold major with mixed sentiments of fear and envy. The high reputation this "founder of his own fortune" had acquired, placed him in that position in society which Phillips could never hope to reach; and, had he wanted an additional stimulus to confirm him in his designs upon the

quaint you that I shall be appointed to a troop in the — Dragoon Guards, in the next Gazette.”

“ Indeed !” returned O’Connor, coldly.

“ Fact, ’pon honour. Had I been an hour later, the chance was lost. Was I not lucky ?”

“ I think not. Had I a brother similarly circumstanced, I should have been delighted to hear that his carriage had broken down ; and had his neck been accidentally dislocated, I fancy I might have outlived the calamity.”

“ And,” returned Phillips, reddening with vexation, “ is the interchange of a company of foot for a troop of cavalry nothing in the estimation of Major O’Connor ? For my part, I congratulate myself on the event.”

“ I wish I could do the same,” replied the soldier.

“ Major O’Connor,” returned Phillips, with some haughtiness : “ I came here to announce the event, and not to seek your congratulations.”

“ You did wisely,” was the reply, “ in not asking what I could not have obliged you with.”

There was an embarrassing pause. Phillips was burning with suppressed rage—O’Connor provokingly cold and sarcastic. In a few moments the former resumed the conversation.

“ Major O’Connor, you are welcome to estimate my reasons for exchanging as you please ; I can best appreciate the motives that obliged it ; and it is perfectly unnecessary for me to enter into the private considerations which may have induced me to remain in England.”

“ Oh ! I perceive it ; you have had another peep at the planets—another interview with the Gipsy,” said Phillips with a sneer.

“ I have not *avoided her*, Captain Phillips. There is nothing in the future that *I fear* ; nothing in *the past* that I am ashamed to hear repeated.”

The major’s sarcasm appeared to wound the captain deeply. He continued : “ But there is no mystery in the matter ; your approaching marriage is no secret.”

“ Marriage !” exclaimed the captain, with a laugh ; “ and with whom ? ”

“ Surely, it would be unnecessary to name the lady, to whom, but a few mornings since, Captain Phillips plighted his vows upon the common ? ”

“ Damnation ! ” exclaimed the captain, reddening with vexation. “ I am under espionage, it would seem.”

“ *I am no spy upon your actions, sir ;*” returned the major, warmly.

“ Well, it is rather hard, you must admit, that a man cannot amuse himself a little in the forest, without having his flirtations chronicled over the country.”

“ I do not precisely understand the terms you use ”—said O’Connor, coldly ; “ nor comprehend how a serious suit like yours to Miss Howard, can be so indifferently described.”

“ Upon my life, Major O’Connor, it would appear that all my actions are to be submitted to a rigorous inquisition. It is rather a novelty in military life, for a man to be censured for

an affair essentially my own, and with which you are totally unconnected."

"I *have* a deep interest in Miss Howard's happiness—" replied the commander, "and I demand—"

"Nothing, if you please, from me, major. Miss Howard has a father, and I am quite prepared to give him an explanation, whenever he chooses to require one."

He took his hat, and moved towards the door, but O'Connor, with a tone and manner that would not be gainsayed, waved his hand, and signalled that he should remain.

"A few words before we separate, Captain Phillips—and they are the last, except officially, which shall ever pass between us."

"Just as you please," returned Phillips, with a formal bow.

"I have no sister—" continued the major, "no female relative that is dear to me. Had I one, and any living man dared tamper with her affections, or think of her with disrespect, what think you would be my conduct?"

“ Upon my soul—” replied the captain with a puppyish drawl, “ I cannot pretend to guess.”

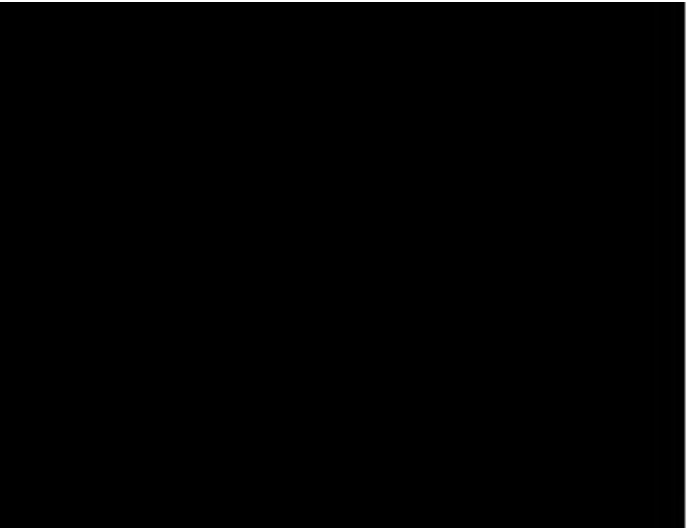
“ I would exact from him speedy satisfaction, and teach him such a lesson, as should make him tremble for the future, before he trifled with a woman’s love.”


“ Indeed, major!” said the captain sarcastically; while O’Connor continued with increasing warmth—

“ But if the injury were deeper—if, profiting by absence of suspicion, he abused her confidence, and wrought her shame and ruin:—what would

his brows grew dark, and his voice became tremulous and hollow — “Phillips! Mary Howard is my adopted sister;—*wrong her*, and an altar shall not save you! Farewell—we understand each other.”

He pointed to the door. The captain, with lips pale with rage and craven apprehension, hurried from the apartment, and the major was left alone.





J E A L O U S Y .

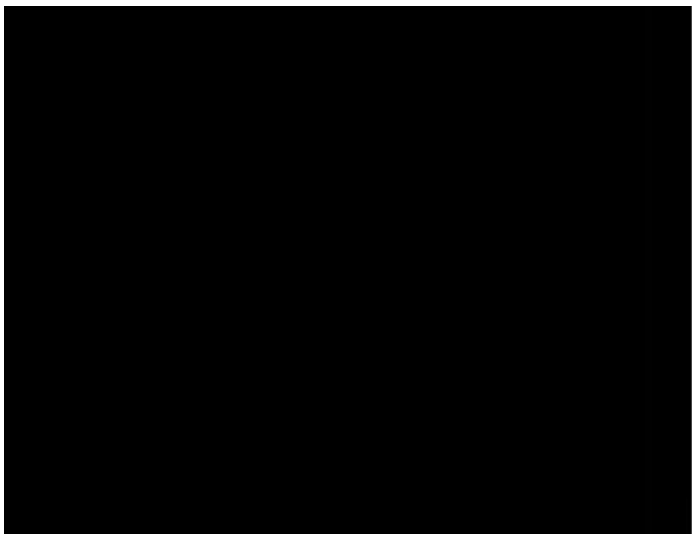
IAGO. Pray be content.

OTHELLO. Oh !—blood, Iago, blood !

IAGO. Patience, I say ; your mind, perchance, may change.

OTHELLO. Never, Iago.

SHAKSPEARE.



CHAPTER VI.

JEALOUSY.

FROM the inconvenient hour the Gipsy had named for their interview, O'Connor ordered dinner in his own chamber, and declined joining the mess-party. He was anxious to converse with Ellen again; for his recent tête-à-tête with Phillips proved that her suspicions were well founded; and convinced him that the captain's pursuit of Mary Howard was not intended to have an honourable close. But to watch over that still beloved girl was denied, and his departure for the Peninsula would remove Phillips from his *surveillance*. Mr. Howard, from the

simplicity of his character and ignorance of the world, was but a poor protector. All O'Connor could do, he had done; "Fears for themselves mean villains have;" and personal apprehension might deter Phillips from attempting a seduction which, whether successful or disconcerted, must draw down on him the certain vengeance of a determined enemy. It was only left to him to warn Mary of her danger, and guard the unsuspecting girl against the specious sophistry of an accomplished scoundrel.

By a circuitous route and unperceived, he left

second look assured him it was his rival. Phillips was evidently seeking a private interview with his mistress, and the precautions he took to elude observation, showed that he intended his visit should be a secret one.

O'Connor's blood boiled with fury. What was to be done? His first impulse was to confront Phillips at the moment—apprize Mr. Howard of all he knew, and all he suspected—and require a distinct avowal of his rival's intentions touching the "old man's daughter." But this was impossible; for, at their parting interview, Mary had requested him to keep her attachment secret, and exacted a promise that he would not pain her father by letting him discover that he had offered her his hand, and the offer had been rejected. After a minute's reflection he decided on keeping his appointment in the forest, confiding the whole to Ellen, and taking counsel from her.

He hurried across the common—and, with a heart bursting with jealous rage, reached the

rendervous in the coppice, and found the Gipsy already there. Her keen glance rested for an instant on the soldier's countenance, and she perceived at once the storm of passion that was raging in his tortured bosom.

“ You are ill at ease, major,” she said, sharply. “ What unusual occurrence has disturbed you thus ? ”

“ Occurrence, Ellen ! I shall go mad. Hell is raging in my breast, and I could cut any body's throat who crossed me ! ”

“ This excitement is indeed singular in one

“You have seen Phillips?” said the Gipsy.

“Ay; and unmasked him, Ellen. Your words were indeed prophetic. She whom I love so devotedly—for whom this breast is bleeding—he regards but as a plaything, to be easily courted and as easily thrown aside. You spoke truly, Ellen; and Phillips seeks that artless being’s ruin.”

“And will effect it,” replied the Gipsy, “unless heaven has otherwise decreed it.”

“Never!” exclaimed the soldier passionately; “I will warn her of his villany and her danger.”

“It will not avail.”

“Then, by my hopes of heaven, I’ll cut his throat i’ the church.”

“Will that,” said the Gipsy, “restore the blighted flower, after his touch has withered it?”

“I will anticipate his villany,” continued the soldier, storming with fury. “He shall fight me before an hour. I’ll insult him in the street—I’ll strike him in the mess-room!”

“And what will that avail?” said the Gipsy,

calmly. "The coward can always evade a battle. The act you meditate will only give notoriety to your disappointment, and apprise the world that your suit has been unfortunate, and another's more successful. No, no, O'Connor.—Patience! I will watch over Mary Howard as a mother; and if human means can avert her ruin, I will save her!"

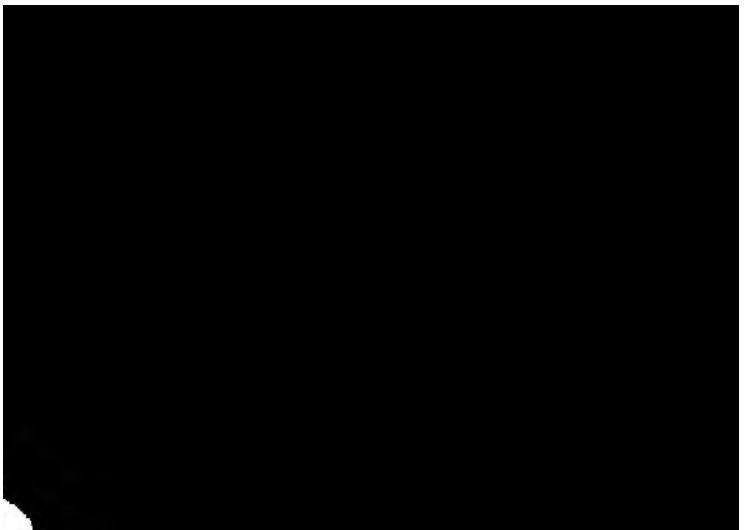
The soldier remained silent for a moment, as if struggling to repress his rage; suddenly he caught the Gipsy's hand.

"Ellen," he said, in hollow tones—"Ellen,

fooled away her heart, and bestowed her regard upon a scoundrel, that the soldier should turn driveller—the hero a whimpering schoolboy? Rouse yourself! Sit down upon this bank. You may remember, before we parted last night, I promised to tell you something of my history.”

“Yes,” cried the major, eagerly; “do let me hear it, Ellen—” and he sighed heavily. “I will try and listen with composure—and—if I can, forget Mary Howard.”

The Gipsy cast her eyes across the forest, as if to ascertain that the soldier and herself were safe from interruption. Far as her glance ranged, no living thing was visible. She placed herself beside him on the turf, and then commenced her wild and eventful narrative.



THE GIPSY'S STORY.

But who was she ?

Was she as those who love their lords, or they
Who love the lords of others? Such have been,
Even in the olden time, Rome's annals say.
Was she a matron of Cornelia's mien,
Or the light air of Egypt's graceful queen,
Profuse of joy, or 'gainst it did she war,
Inveterate in virtue ?

CHILDE HAROLD.

How changed since last her speaking eye
Glanced gladness round the glittering room,
Where high-born men were proud to wait,
Where beauty watched to imitate
Her gentle voice—her lovely mien.

PARASINA.



CHAPTER VII.

THE GIPSY'S STORY.

THE first recollections of infancy lie in a Gipsy encampment. I remember my mother, but of my father have no distinct idea. I have, however, confused notions of our wandering life—sometimes reposing in a barn—sometimes bivouacked beneath a hedge—while in our journeyings, I was carried in the pannier of a donkey, with a load of tinker's implements deposited in the opposite basket, to form an equipoise.

The next era that I remember in my history, was when residing with a nobleman's park-keeper. The earl's lady was childish; and

having accidentally seen me in my mother's arms, was struck with my beauty, and determined to adopt me. I remember that I could scarcely reconcile myself to the quiet and regular household of the comfortable yeoman; I sighed after the erratic life to which I had been accustomed from my childhood, and increased indulgence alone overcame my antipathy to a settled residence. According to the countess's arrangement with my mother, she was permitted to see me twice in the year; and it required all the Gipsy's influence to persuade me to remain be-

their relations, and led a lonely and unjoyous life. I was now in my tenth year; pains had been bestowed upon my education.—I was quick, and learned rapidly. Before six months wore away I was removed to the drawing-room; and every effort used to cultivate precocious talents, and bestow upon a gipsy girl accomplishments far better suited for the daughter of a peer.

Three years passed. I grew apace; and the few who were admitted to the hall, spoke in raptures of my beauty, while in private they censured the partiality of my noble protectors; and marvelled that they should cast aside those of their own lineage, to lavish their kindness on the offspring of a vagabond.

Time still moved on, and I entered on my fifteenth summer. My talents were sedulously cultivated, and every wish I expressed promptly complied with. The blandishments of my patrons, and the flattery of their guests, were profusely lavished on me, and yet—strange confession! the formalities of polished society were

irksome and oppressive ; and there were moments when I sighed for the wild freedom that my mother enjoyed, and which was denied to me.

“ Yet, notwithstanding the marked regard of the earl and his lady, their influence was not sufficient to obtain for their *élèvee* a cordial reception in the houses of those with whom they visited. Many of the surrounding gentry took part with the family connexions from whom they had estranged themselves. At a contested election, the candidate supported by the earl

tives, and I was more caressed than ever. But a strange occurrence at this time wrought an important change in his plans, and my destiny. It is briefly told :

His only brother, with whom the earl was at feud, had a younger son who bore but an indifferent character. He was said to be dissolute and extravagant, attached to gallantry and play—and, in the fullest acceptation of the word, a *roué*.

He was no favourite with his father ; and, holding a commission in the guards, proved an expensive drain upon the purse of a younger brother who was not over opulent. Yet his parent had been liberal to the utmost extent of his means, relieved him from many pecuniary embarrassments, more than once saved his commission from being sold ; and until his son's circumstances became desperate, strained every nerve to prevent his child from being disgraced.

But nothing could reclaim the prodigal. Remarkable for personal advantages, he had,

although young, acquired a profligate celebrity ; and a mania for play rendered his reformation almost hopeless. In a discreditable gambling transaction, to use the fashionable phrase, he had "broken down." The loss of his commission resulted. His father refused to see him ; and the discarded son was the inmate of a neighbouring alehouse, when chance apprized the earl that his ruined nephew was so near, and that his father had disowned him.

The earl was weak, and the earl was vindictive. To succour his brother's discarded son, and

was secluded ; that the visitings of its inmates were limited ; and that, owing to the circumstances attendant on my birth and adoption, an extended intimacy with the neighbouring gentry was denied. Those who resorted to the hall were, with a few exceptions, persons of advanced age ; and the younger men of ordinary manner, and indifferent exteriors. Imagine my delight, when a military personage of prepossessing appearance and very elegant address, was presented to me. He seemed a being of another caste—something I had read of, but never seen. At first sight Henry Loftus caught my fancy, and with a girlish passion — the strongest while it endures—I loved the handsome stranger.

I need not dwell upon the story of a first attachment. Henry Loftus engrossed my whole thoughts, and while the brief delusion lasted, the world held nothing worth possessing but his love. A month rolled on ; while he resided with us, the hall appeared an earthly paradise ; but, alas ! he was already weary of its retire-

ment, and sighed to return to the scenes of dissipation from which his misconduct had exiled him.

Nor was the opportunity wanted long. The earl having been apprized how deeply his brother was annoyed, at his having espoused the quarrel of a child who had so shamefully abused the generosity of a too-indulgent parent, executed a will, barring the rest of the family from inheriting some large estates, which he had the power of devising as he pleased, and naming the discarded son his successor. This strange act, however,

But with Henry Loftus profligacy was too deeply rooted to be eradicated, and his vicious habits were irreclaimable. He was now possessor of a sum of money that seemed inexhaustible, and delighted at the prospect of revisiting London. He came to my dressing-room to say farewell ; I was unprepared for a sudden separation—the thought of his leaving me was distracting—and, in the madness of the moment, I owned my love, and confessed that life without him was insupportable. Loftus perceived the wildness of my passion ; and, to worthily repay the earl's bounty, and *écarter* his own return to town, he determined that I should accompany him. Deep were his declarations of attachment : brilliantly he pictured the elysium that London alone could realize — and ended in urging an elopement. My vanity was excited—my imagination dazzled—and, in a rash hour, I consented to his request. His servant managed to convey away my clothes and jewels among his master's baggage—at midnight, through a drawing-room

window, I stepped out upon the lawn—reached a private outlet from the park—found my lover waiting for me—entered the carriage—and flung myself, in tears, upon his breast! The horses went off at speed—and I left the hall for ever.

We arrived in town, drove to a fashionable lodging, and the reappearance of Henry Loftus soon caused an unusual sensation. A month before, he had fled from the metropolis, a ruined blackleg—then, “every tongue his follies named”—but now, he had returned with a full

The demon of play led him to the gaming-table again ; sharpers, abler than himself, plundered him without mercy : and, in one month from our arrival, my destroyer was once more a beggar. A few minutes after he had despatched his servant, with a check, to draw his last fifty from the banker, the morning paper was brought in ; there the earl's death was noticed, and judge what the *roué's* feelings were, when he read the particulars connected with the event, as set forth in a lengthened paragraph. Enraged at the base ingratitude of his nephew, the earl never recovered the shock attendant on the seduction of his *élevée*. Feeling himself indisposed, he tore the will that had left Loftus his heir, and me thirty thousand pounds, and executed a new one, bequeathing his immense estates to his proper successors. Loftus's name, however, was duly mentioned in a codicil—there was a bequest for his use—a shilling to provide himself a halter ! The earl died before he could quarrel with his relatives again. Henry's father had now a title,

and a noble fortune to support it ; and the profligate, his son, was once more a ruined man—a broken blackguard.

So quickly did the story of this downfal travel, that in a few hours afterwards Loftus was arrested ; he contrived, however by parting with his watch and rings, to effect his liberation, and kept close within doors, to evade other creditors, who were seeking him. Late in the evening he sent me to Richmond, with a letter to a friend, who, as he informed me, was heavily his debtor. I sought him at the Star and Garter in vain, and

address he mentioned, would take me into keeping, and hinted that to secure this desirable arrangement, I should be speedy in making application to "his friend."

I shall despatch the rest of his history in a few words: he went to Paris—haunted the Palais Royal—played, and was cleaned out; cheated, and was kicked by an Irish officer. He was abandoned by his companion, my maid; and one morning found in the Morgue, having been picked out of the Seine, with his throat cut; whether the act was his own, or an assassin's nobody inquired—for no one cared.

I had been kept in such a whirlwind of pleasure, novelty, and dissipation, that for a time I could not believe myself deserted, and looked at passing events as nothing but illusions. Gradually the truth broke upon me; I became alive to the wretchedness of my situation, and the falsehood of man burst upon me with withering violence. The warmth of my natural temper, an utter ignorance of the world, the suddenness

with which the veil was rent asunder, and the being whom I had invested with superhuman qualities, denuded of his fascinations, and presented to my view in all the nakedness of exposed and acknowledged villany, was too much—and a brain fever resulted. Youth bore me through. With returning reason, I found myself stretched on a mattress, in the ward of a fever-hospital, surrounded by a score of sufferers, as forlorn and deserted as myself.

I recovered; but where was I to turn to?

There was not a being on earth, I thought, that

stretched her untamed pinion? To find my mother was a difficult undertaking—the migrations of her tribe were chiefly regulated by the seasons, and this was some clue to a discovery. I made the attempt; and after a world of adventure, reached the bivouac of the wanderers.

I endeavoured to forget what I once had, and what I might now have been, and accommodated my dress to my present destitution. As I neared the gipsy haunts, my spirit appeared to revive. My beauty occasioned me much annoyance, but I evaded or repulsed the impertinences I received; and with feelings of unspeakable delight, found myself on the tenth evening, beneath the canvass roof that had sheltered my infant cradle.

For two years I led a roving life, wild in the extreme, but not without its pleasures; and, while my parent lived, I never regretted the singular vicissitudes of fortune, that had annihilated my affluence and splendour, and again made me a mendicant and a vagabond.

It was now the end of autumn, and our tribe

had formed an encampment upon this very common. My mother, who had been for some days indisposed, rapidly became worse, and the disease was ascertained to be a malignant fever. The weather changed; wind and rain rendered our bivouac cold and humid; and to remove my sick parent to some place where she would at least be certain of shelter from the inclement season, was the only hope that remained of her recovery. But where was that asylum to be found? Few would receive a Gipsy when in health beneath their roof-tree; and who would

ing was closed against me, and I left the hamlet in despair, to rejoin the dying wanderer in our damp and cheerless hovel, and receive her parting sigh upon a bed of litter, from which a pampered hound would turn.

I had already passed the vicarage, when I perceived Mr. Howard standing in the porch of the building, with a sweet little girl in his arms. Both were habited in mourning, for he had lost his lady but recently. A sudden impulse induced me to turn back. I did so; and told him of my mother's misery. He listened with a look of gentle sympathy. "And is she so very ill?" he inquired, in a tone of commiseration, so different from the harsh accents with which the villagers had rejected my suit! "She is dying," I replied. "Dying! and in the forest. Poor girl, I will go with you." He called the nurse, placed his daughter in her arms, and instantly accompanied me to our wretched bivouac.

The sight of so much misery appeared to shock him. My mother was delirious. Mr.

Howard bent over and felt her pulse. "It is fever," he muttered, "and of the worst type. She must be removed instantly. It would be a crying sin to desert a human being in the forest, and leave her to perish like a masterless dog. Carry her to my home, and I will go on before and prepare a place to receive her." It was done: the dying woman was borne to the good man's dwelling. She was tenderly nursed; the village doctor attended her; the parson visited her constantly, and was seen praying beside the bed of fever, which the lowest menial of his household

coins which, after her decease, had been found concealed upon my mother's person. The good man looked at me with deep compassion, as he murmured in an under tone, "She is too young and handsome to escape temptation, and avoid the snares which are ever laid for the unsuspecting. What is your name?" I answered him—"Ellen." He said, "I tremble for you. If you attach yourself to those wandering people who left the forest when their companion, your mother, was on her dying bed, you will be assailed by temptations which, at your years, mostly prove irresistible. I cannot see you on the very brink of destruction without an attempt to save you. Here you would be secure. Had my lamented wife been spared, she would have been a more suitable protector. But remain here, and while I live, this roof shall shelter you.

I burst into tears, and accepted gratefully the good man's invitation. I was indeed weary of the world, such as it had been to me. I had been the child of strange destinies; a very shut-

decock of fortune ; born in beggary and nursed in opulence ; courted, admired, and followed ; ruined, plundered, and deserted. Here, in this peaceful and secluded dwelling, I could wear away my appointed days, removed alike from those maddening moments of pleasure and attendant misery, to which the denizens of earth are subjected by the laws of being.

Alas ! I little knew myself, when I supposed that one with the wild blood that circulated in my veins, would remain long the contented member of a regulated and comfortable household.

the place. My mother's grave was in the village cemetery, and I had conceived a deep attachment for the lovely orphan, who had been principally intrusted to my charge. I think these gentler ties might have subdued my wandering inclinations, had not unexpected temptation rendered the impulse I was combating too powerful for resistance.

There was an annual fair holding in a neighbouring hamlet, and the servants of the parsonage had obtained Mr. Howard's permission to visit it. They invited me to accompany them ; but I had some misgivings that made me decline going. Renewed entreaties, and a promise of gay ribbons from my admirers—for I had made some rustic conquests—at last induced me to consent, and we set out for the scene of merriment and love-making.

The first sight of the tents—the distant sound of music—waving pennons and painted show-boxes—booths exhibiting toys and trinkets—and all the display of holiday finery, so tempting to

the fancy of the rustic maid, all raised anew my gipsy propensities, and my heart beat with delight in looking at a scene associated with my first ideas of pleasure. I mixed in the merry throng, and had roamed for some time through the crowded fair before I discovered that I had strayed from my companions. I turned instantly to seek them, when a hand touched mine, and a voice, too familiar to be mistaken, whispered, "Ellen!" It was an ancient female of our tribe; she beckoned me to follow: I obeyed, and we left the throng unobserved.

wept bitterly. The evening was closing before I could bring myself to quit the turf that covered her ashes; and with a heavy heart I returned to Mr. Howard's residence, to make the necessary preparations for my journey.

As the hour drew near my resolution failed, and I regretted that I had promised to meet the Gipsy. I hung over my lovely and innocent charge, as she lay calmly sleeping, and while my tears fell fast, invoked blessings on the child, and covered her smiling face with kisses. Except my mother, I had never loved another half so dearly, and to tear myself away required more firmness than I could command. I was still at the infant's bed when midnight knelled from the old tower. Presently some particles of gravel struck lightly against the casement. I looked out—the Gipsy was below. Again and again I kissed the gentle child—flung my bundle to my companion—silently descended from the window—took a farewell look at the parsonage—the forest was before me—I was

now homeless and unprotected — and, at nineteen, alone upon the world. But why complain? It was predestined so.

For a time a wandering life passed pleasantly enough. My beauty rendered me an object of consideration as a daughter of the tribe; and among the swarthy community I had more than one suitor. Michael, as the leader was named, honoured me with his addresses. He was a bold and dexterous fellow, acute and daring, with a superior intelligence, that under other circumstances might have earned a name

as his companion. Flattery failed—and to the gipsy regulations I refused obedience. This infraction of arbitrary laws was of course resented, and Michael's claim upon me as a wife, supported by the whole community. It was idle to resist what all had determined ; and no alternative remained but submission to an arbitrary decree, or an immediate elopement — and, of course, I chose the latter.

It required, however, considerable caution to effect an escape without risking a discovery, as that event would draw down the vengeance of the tribe, and expose me to the mildest penalty of disobedience—an instant union with the chief. But mine was a determined spirit—and I exerted all my ingenuity to mask my design, and not excite suspicion. As if influenced by the general decision, I gave a reluctant consent. Michael was overjoyed ; the gang delighted at an approaching scene of revelry ; and the third evening was appointed to witness the performance of that rude ceremony, which constitutes a gipsy marriage.

For two days, I found no opportunity of quitting the encampment unperceived, but on the third I was more successful. I managed to escape, and directed my course towards Canterbury, from which city our bivouac was not very distant.

As I was afterwards informed, my flight was quickly known, and it caused a direful commotion among the wanderers. Instant pursuit was given—the tribe scattered themselves over the country—and from their cunning and celerity it was never doubted that the fugitive would be

beggar the route I had taken, with amazing speed and certain accuracy he followed my flying steps, like a bloodhound on his quest.

Canterbury was in sight, when exhausted by rapid exertions to escape I was obliged to rest, and turning into a small plantation, seated myself upon a fallen tree. I breathed freely—I had succeeded—the city of refuge was before me, and there I should be secure against any attempts which the gipsy tribe should make to repossess their errant daughter. What future course should I pursue? Should I return and claim Mr. Howard's protection, or seek fresh fortunes as a wanderer. I smiled, when fancying the confusion my escape would cause, and the fury and disappointment of the fiery bridegroom, when it was discovered that the lady of his choice had played him truant, and left her ardent lover without a parting farewell. "Yes," I said, "it was well planned, and boldly executed; Michael, thou must seek another mistress; I have no desire to become a gipsy queen. How will he

storm," I continued, "when evening comes, and the bride is wanting; the fugitive escaped pursuit; and the bridal festival turned into an angry brawl!"—I laughed—"Oh, that I could see him for a moment, and whisper in his swarthy ear, that a girl's wit was keener than a chieftain's cunning."

"You shall be gratified," returned a voice that made my blood run cold; I threw back a hasty glance, and over my shoulder peered the vindictive eyes of my exasperated and deserted suitor.

us—” and he gave a fiendish laugh. “Come let us be friends; kiss me, Nell—I forgive thy flight for this time, wench!”

“Kiss thee!” I exclaimed as I sprang up, and waved him from me. “No, Michael, force only could make me yours.”

“Indeed!” he muttered, while with a deep imprecation he added, “Then force shall;” and he seized my arm roughly, while I screamed loudly for help. The words were scarcely spoken, when a noise was heard, as if somebody was crushing through the brushwood. The Gipsy dropped my arm, and searched his bosom for a weapon. Next moment a man vaulted lightly over the paling, and haughtily demanded the occasion of the outcry.

The stranger was young and handsome; rather above the middle size, with a person that indicated more activity than strength. There was that assured character in his bearing which bespeaks a fearless heart. He was dressed as sportsmen generally are, and bore no weapon,

except a walking-stick. Notwithstanding the plainness of his shooting-dress, the air and manner of the stranger were too decided, to allow his profession to be doubted for a moment.

Michael glared upon him, with a mixed look of fear and hatred, as he impudently demanded "What brought him there?" The stranger's lip curled scornfully, while he measured the gipsy chief from head to foot.

"Brought me here!" he replied, in a high tone. "Scoundrel! repeat your insolence, and I promise you a broken head." Then turning to

“Hallo! fellow”—he shouted, “hands off, if you value whole bones. Come, pretty one, I will see you safe to Canterbury.”

Michael's looks became darker and more ferocious. Placing himself between me and the gate of the plantation, he suddenly unsheathed a long and peculiar claspknife which he always carried on his person, and swore a deep oath, that if the stranger did not leave us, he would bury the weapon in his heart.

But the soldier was in no wise daunted. He returned his menace with a look of bold defiance, and raised his stick, as if preparing to parry the Gipsy's thrust. Suddenly, and without any apparent effort, except a slight movement of the wrist, he smote Michael's hand so sharply, that the knife flew from his grasp, and fell ten yards distance into the thick copsewood. The Gipsy made an attempt to recover his lost weapon, but the soldier stepped between him and the spot where it fell.

“Halt!” he shouted, in a voice that obliged

the ruffian to obey the order. "Fellow, I have given thee a bruised hand, and another step ensures thee a broken head. Off! I say—or, by St. Patrick, I'll crack that skull of thine as I would a walnut-shell, and leave as many marks upon thy swarthy hide as will cause you to remember the touch of an Irish sapling; ay, to the latest hour of your life."

He said—and taking my hand led me to the gate, without any attempt on Michael's part to bar our egress from the wood. We were now upon the high road, and, of course, in compara-

of my people approaching; and if my memory holds good, there is a horsepond at no great distance."

The Gipsy looked in the direction to which the soldier's eyes had turned, and observed several men in uniforms moving slowly towards the wood.

"Farewell"—he said—"farewell, Ellen; at least for a time. Many a bitter hour this morning's slight shall cost thee; ay—when thou art *mine*, and no hand is near to succour."

"*Yours!* Never, Michael!"

He gave a parting look of deadly meaning, tossed his thin arm above his head, and continued, in a tone convulsive from the violence of his passion—"Mine! yes, mine. Men and fiends shall never move Michael's resolution. Ellen," and he dropped his voice—"mine you shall be, though I hang for it!"

These were his last words; for, bounding into the coppice, he vanished in the thick plantation.

My deliverer looked for a short space at the place where the Gipsy disappeared. "Upon my life," he said, "a pleasant sort of gentleman! a suitor who will not be refused, it seems. How came one so pretty as you, Ellen, to fall into that fellow's company? It was fortunate that I was netting rabbits in the wood, or that bronzed ruffian would have done you some serious mischief."

In reply to his questions, I told him a portion of my story, and mentioned my orphanage, and

“ I cannot tell.”

“ Have you not some acquaintance ?”

“ None who could serve me.”

He looked at me. “ I never saw one so beautiful and so desolate. Good heaven ! have you considered the risk that one so attractive as yourself must be exposed to in a world where men are nowise scrupulous, and matter not the means by which the end is accomplished ?”

I sighed heavily ; and the past flashed painfully to my recollection.

The stranger was silent for a moment. “ I am but a sorry counsellor”—he said ; “ Come, you must have me for lack of better ; and between danger and yourself I can only interpose the honour of my country. Let me think.—My serjeant's wife will take care of you at present, and we will then try and find out if a better home can be obtained.”

He looked at me attentively. “ It is wondrous beauty for a wanderer !” and continued in a low tone, “ A strange adventure altogether ! I with

the lightest reputation in a dissipated corps—I selected to be mentor of a being so lovely as thou, Ellen. Well, no matter—all are not safely judged by look; and in me, notwithstanding all my levity, you may obtain an honest protection than from men of graver exterior. Will you trust me, Ellen; and confide in one who never yet failed friend or foe?"

My eyes turned upon his. I read his countenance with gipsy caution. The handsome outlines had kindled into nobleness; his cheek was flushing; while the honest expansion of the brow

was an anomalous character. His habits were simple and luxurious, he was shrewd and witty, weak and improvident; while the warmth of an unbridled temper,

“Mild with the gentle—with the froward, stern,”

led him into eternal scrapes, from which an excellent natural understanding, had it been cultivated and developed, scarcely managed to extricate him. He was perfectly single-hearted, and his purse and person alike ready at a call. Honour with him was a sort of phantom, an undefined idea of a feeling that should direct a gentleman's career. He was humane. To witness the corporal punishment of an irreclaimable delinquent pained him to the soul; although, that same morning, and for an imaginary offence, he had dangerously wounded an old companion. His virtues were noble; his failings pardonable; the whole was a union of opposites, which rendered George Harley an object of regard and fear—envied by some, detested by others; in short, a man in different times, and dif-

ferent tempers, pitied and admired, courted and avoided.

The soldier's wife, to whose care I was consigned, procured me a lodging beside her own, in a neat cottage in the suburbs of the town; and, from her kindness and attention, it was evident that Harley's charges had been strict. Her husband was the captain's pay-sergeant, she acted as his laundress, and to my young protector both appeared strongly attached. But Harley was just the man to be a regimental favourite. His humanity had procured him the

affable and kind. He was indeed well suited for a leader ; and those he commanded looked to him with confidence and regard. In the licence permitted the soldier when marching, the officer was not too proud to share ; and in the hour of danger, when others would have said " go on," Harley would have shouted " follow !"

There was a studied delicacy observed in my preserver's conduct towards me, which, certainly the circumstances under which we met would scarcely warrant. Until the second day he left me to myself, nor did he visit me then, until he had ascertained from Mrs. Owen that I was desirous to speak to him.

When Harley came to my assistance in the wood, he found a gipsy-girl in the wild costume of her tribe ; but when he visited me at the serjeant's lodging, I was becomingly attired in the neat and simple dress that I had worn when in Mr. Howard's residence. The alteration in my appearance was striking, if I might judge from Harley's surprise. Nor was he less changed,

for the light infantry uniform he was dressed in was well calculated to show to its best advantage a figure light, elegant, and athletic.

Our interview was long. I found his manners extremely prepossessing; for without the tinsel assurance of high life, there was an openness, a manly honesty in all that Harley said, that won me more than a courtier address, where the polish is quite apparent, but the sincerity doubtful. We parted with an engagement to meet on the morrow, and a promise on my part to acquaint him with the particulars of a history

victim? Is it not a strange coincidence in our fates, that the same smooth-tongued traitor should have ruined both?"

I expressed astonishment, and he thus continued:—

“The tale of folly is soon told. We were schoolfellows, and Loftus my favourite companion. He was weak and timid, and I fought his battles. His allowance was small, mine was liberal—and we had a common purse.

“We separated at fifteen—he to go to Oxford, and I to join a regiment in India, to which I had been gazetted.

“Six years passed. My father died, and I came home and succeeded to my inheritance. It was unfortunately money in the funds, and I had a discretionary power to use it as I pleased. I came to London to purchase my company; and there I found my once-loved schoolfellow, who had left the university, and was now a lieutenant in the Coldstream. Of course, our intimacy was renewed—on my part with unchanged

affection, on his, with a fixed determination to avail himself of my confidence, and plunder me of my last guinea.

“It is not necessary to follow the scoundrel through all the sinuous plans with which his object was achieved. I was a blind and ready dupe. I had not a suspicion of him, while all besides knew that my false friend was plucking me to the very pen-feather.

“For some months I was absent in Ireland with my regiment, and the vicissitudes of Loftus's

fortunes reached me, but in my father's

was to my friend; but he was invisible. I entered an adjoining coffee-room, and read there a paragraph, in an evening print, that left the ruin of Loftus no longer a matter of report.

“ The morning, however, brought with it a full exposé of his villany; yet, such was my fatuity, that with irrefragable proof before my eyes, I could scarce bring myself to credit it. One by one his deep-laid plans were developed; and it was plain, that I had been coolly and unmercifully plundered. Boiling with rage, I determined on immediate pursuit, and drove to my bankers; but there Loftus had anticipated me, and three days before, by a forged check, drawn out my last guinea.

“ Nothing but vengeance was left, and I determined to hunt the black-hearted traitor to the death. For a time all trace of him was lost, and two or three attempts which I made to discover him failed. At last, I heard that he had been recently seen in Paris, and thither I proceeded. For several days I haunted the gaming-houses,

but Loftus was not there, although until the last week, he had been a regular attendant.

“ I found him, Ellen !—where ?—Where such a villain should be found—in the Morgue ! I never saw any thing so diabolical as the dead man's countenance ! His throat from ear to ear was severed. I gazed on the horrid spectacle, if not with pleasure, certainly without pity. I had been saved some trouble ; I should have killed the ruffian had we met ; but his felon hand, or (and more probably) a murderer's knife, prevented the necessity of my becoming

It is not difficult to conjecture how our intimacy might have terminated, had events progressed in their common course; but an unexpected occurrence hurried matters to a close. —I had more than once rambled in the evening through the streets, and breathed the fresh air, which, to one like me, was indispensable. Closely muffled, I had, hitherto, escaped observation; and Michael's threats had made me confine my walks to the streets and suburbs. On the preceding evening, a man had followed me. He was troublesome, and to escape impertinence I hurried to my lodgings, and so lightly did I think of the affair, that next day the occurrence was forgotten.

Harley was an early visitor. He was scarcely seated, when a child belonging to the house brought up a sealed billet, which, he said, had been given to him by a fine gentleman, with a request that it should be safely delivered.

Harley appeared astounded; his face flushed;

the handwriting was well known to him, and in a flurried voice he addressed me. "You have been but a short time in Canterbury, Ellen, and yet you have made a brilliant conquest."

"I have achieved it unconsciously," I replied in a calm voice.

"Indeed! Know you not, then, the writer of this effusion?"

"I am ignorant of his very existence. Can you tell me his name?"

"It is no doubt detailed fully here"—and he

me without obtaining a reply, and obliged me to seek shelter in my lodgings, and followed me to the door."

"Indeed! it were hard that exercise was debarred you by such impertinence, and it shall be looked to. Farewell, Ellen—I shall call early to-morrow. May I keep this billet? and have you no curiosity to know its contents?"

"Retain it, certainly"—I replied; "for so little does it interest me, that were it returned, it should be consigned unopened to the fire."

"Once more, farewell, Ellen!" He took my hand in his, kissed me affectionately—and I was left alone.

The evening fell; it was rainy and boisterous. I had some presentiment of evil—the gloomy weather probably induced it, and to divert my melancholy thoughts, I invited the sergeant's wife to tea. Later than usual, Owen came to conduct her home, and I fancied that he appeared thoughtful and dispirited. I concluded that some regimental affair had vexed him, and I regretted

it, for the honest Welshman had been kind to me as a father.

Morning came, and morning passed without Harley's customary visit. This unusual absence alarmed me, and my apprehensions were increased, by observing that the sergeant and his wife were visibly dejected, although it was evident that they endeavoured to conceal their uneasiness from me. My inquiries after Harley were evaded, and his absence, when I pressed to know the cause, was excused by saying that he was on duty. But when evening arrived, and my protector came

to the torturous uncertainty which Harley's unaccountable absence had occasioned.

A step ascended the stairs softly; I dreaded to look up—no doubt the doomed moment had arrived—I should know the worst—and leaning my head upon the table, I burst into a flood of tears. The late visitor entered, and a man's shadow darkened the opposite wall. I sprang wildly from the chair—it was Harley himself! But, my God, how altered! When last he parted from me, he looked a fortunate and reckless soldier; one who would boldly hew his road through difficulties; and the harder the storm fell, the more buoyant would the spirit rise that should control it. Now, his cheek was wan, his eye rayless, he seemed the ruin of himself; one, on whom fortune had exhausted her angry phial—one, from whose bosom hope had fled.

“Ellen,” he said, in hollow and unearthly tones, “you have surely heard of my madness! Why ask the question? Evil tidings are quickly carried.”

“ I have heard nothing, Captain Harley.”

“ Then poor Owen has been true ”—he muttered.

“ Your absence,” I replied, “ has made me very wretched; I feared that I had forfeited your regard; had unwittingly offended you, and thus had incurred the misfortune of losing my only protector.”

“ Protector ! ” he said, with a laugh that made me shudder. “ Ellen, a fool like me, cannot protect himself. I am a ruined man!—worse far—a disgraced soldier.”

martial, and my name removed with ignominy, from the list that records the brave! I am now alone upon the earth—who will pity one so fallen?”

“Stop, Captain Harley, I exclaimed, “surely you wrong yourself! Probably you have been rash and imprudent, but I would be sworn the taint of dishonour will never rest upon your name. *What has happened? What have you done?*”

“Ellen! before I answer, listen to me, and consider well before you reply. I have told you that I am a ruined man; and fallen as your own fortunes are, mine are still more shattered. Will you with such truth admitted—will you unite your destiny with mine—and all desperate as my future prospects are, will you, Ellen, cling to me through good and evil, and bind your fate to mine!”

Ere he had finished his passionate appeal, I flung myself upon his breast. He swore that for life he would protect me; and in return I plighted him my faith.

“And was the plight kept faithfully?” said O'Connor, interrupting her.

The Gipsy's eye flashed fire—

“Faithfully!” she exclaimed, “Ay! with a fidelity that the court dame could only dream of. It was the compact of the heart, and not the mouth. Think you, that the shorn priest, when he unites the hands, can interchange the affections? or that the gold wire which glitters on the finger of the bride, can charm the heart that haply sighs in secret for another—ay, even at the moment when kneeling at the altar, and when

to the fox and the eagle. In the calm of rustic quietude, in the tempest of war, I never left you. Was this true faith—was this woman's constancy? Yes; though ring, and priest, and all the parade of wedlock were forgotten, the Gipsy's love was fixed as the lights of heaven, and ended where it should do—in the grave of him to whom she had devoted it!"

O'Connor gazed on his singular companion with pity and admiration. The question he had inadvertently asked implied doubt, and recalled the latent ardour of her love. The eye kindled with uncommon brilliancy, as she sprang from the turf she had been resting on; and while repelling a suspicion of her constancy, her whole appearance was noble, commanding, and dramatic. But the allusion to the dead excited softer feelings; gradually she melted into tears, and, through deep emotion, her voice became nearly indistinct. It was, however, but a momentary weakness; her firmness returned, and, dashing the tear from her cheek, she muttered—

“Pshaw!—this is mere drivelling;” and next minute, resuming her place beside the soldier, she thus continued:

“But Harley’s mishap, though bad enough, was not so ruinous in its consequences as was at first apprehended. I was the unhappy cause. The person who followed me in the street, and sent the billet to my residence, was the senior major of the regiment; and, unfortunately, after he had left me, Harley remonstrated with his superior officer, in a tone that produced an irritating answer. The altercation waxed warmer—

withdrawing from the corps, and both disposing of their commissions.

After the first bitterness that parting from a regiment and profession naturally occasioned, Harley appeared to disregard his loss. He was ardently attached to me: he seemed determined to forget the world—he succeeded—and we retired to a beautiful cottage and farm, which the wreck of his patrimony, and the sale of his commission, had secured us.

It was a wild and lovely home. Situated in the remotest district of a northern county, we had all the varied scene that makes retirement desirable—bold hills, a sparkling lake, heath and copsewood, while the sweetest rivulet wandered round the cottage, in which ever an angler threw a line, or the village maid performed her ablutions. The roses mingled with the thatch, and honeysuckle festooned the green veranda. Even winter did not rob the surrounding scenery of its interest; the heights, far as the eye could range, were covered with snow, and

sparkled in the sunshine, while the waters of the lake, in summer so bright and glassy, contrasted with the white mountains, and looked dark as a witch's caldron.

A year passed, and what a year of happiness it was ! If there be an era that memory dwells on with delight, it is the time when I possessed an humble cottage and the man I loved. Harley was equally contented ; he appeared to have forgotten what he had been. In rural pursuits his leisure was occupied, while his active habits found ample occupation in rambling over the

the first love of a father, while I rapturously leaned over the infant's cot, and as I gazed upon my beauteous boy, little dreamed how bitterly that child would wring my heart.

* * * * *

I was sitting on a rustic bench before the cottage, with my infant on my knee. It was a sweet autumnal evening, and all around was lovely and endearing. Harley was fishing in the lake, and, from time to time, my eyes turned from my laughing boy to seek the other object of my love, his father. There was a calm and holy quiet in the scene and hour, and I thought my heart felt an unusual lightness. I kissed my baby's lips—and then blessed Heaven that I was parted from the world. The world! what was it to us? Here was a home with all the joys that love and health and competence could give, and not one harassing care to interrupt its sunshine. I heard the wicket open—the terrier lying at my feet sprang forward with an angry growl. I raised my eyes—and Michael's detested face was glaring in hatred and astonishment on mine!

I was horror-stricken—and, in speechless surprise, stole a side glance at my old admirer. His appearance was sadly altered, he was gaunt and haggard, dressed in the tattered clothing of a sailor, with a small bundle across his shoulder, and a murderous bludgeon in his hand. For some moments we both were silent—but at last Michael addressed me.

“So—we have met once more. I have sought you over England in vain—and many a weary mile the search has cost me. No matter; I am more than repaid for all. And have I

Wilt thou not ask me in, Nell? Methinks this welcome to an old acquaintance is but a sorry one. Wilt thou not offer me a mug of ale? I have walked a weary way to visit you."

I was dreadfully alarmed. There was no one in the cottage; for our domestics, a lad and a woman, were milking in a paddock at some distance from the house. I assumed the appearance of indifference; but, no doubt, an ashy face belied my pretended courage.

"How dare you venture here, Michael? A call from me will bring assistance—and—"

"It will be a loud one," he said, with a fiendish expression of triumphant malice: "No, no, Ellen—I have lain since noon in yonder copse, and watched your keeper to the lake, and your servants to the paddock."

"See ye a man beside the water's edge? Beware of him, Michael: a second meeting may cost you dearer than the first. You cannot have forgotten him."

"No;" said the ruffian coldly, "the man

who crosses me, never ceases to be remembered until the injury is avenged. Harley despised and wronged me. He rescued you from my power, for Heaven made him stronger. He spurned me like a reptile—he scorned me like a dog—and, worse offending far, robbed me of your love. The hour of vengeance is at hand—the time of bitter retribution is nigh.”

“Villain!—you dare not harm us!”

“That,” he returned calmly, “a brief period will discover; I have no time to dally now; I want money, Nell; come, despatch.”

Darting a scowl of unextinguishable hatred towards Harley, he turned a parting glance on me. It was the look of a demon—and like a reptile he slipped away among the underwood, and next moment disappeared.

When Harley saw my pale cheeks, he guessed that some untoward event had happened. A short explanation told him the cause of my alarm: and, seizing a loaded gun, he went in pursuit of the gipsy. It was useless to remonstrate with one of his fiery temperament, and I remained in dreadful uncertainty until he returned from a bootless search. Next day every copse and thicket was examined carefully; but no trace of the ruffian was discovered. A week passed—another succeeded: no doubt, Michael, contented with his subsidy, had disappeared, and dreading Harley's vengeance left the neighbourhood for ever.

The third week ended; an early frost set in; and the first flight of woodcocks were seen on the heaths above the cottage. A day of suc-

cessful exertion had closed, and Harley retired to his room at an early hour, and was speedily wrapped in the unbroken slumbers which reward the mountain sportsman.

For my part, I felt an unusual reluctance to go to my apartment ; I had vague, but fearful apprehensions, and, though I strove to combat what I fancied woman's weakness, Michael haunted my night-dreams, and was seldom absent from my thoughts when waking. I knew him to be a ruthless villain—implacable in hatred—and constant in the purpose of

dreamy sleep, which exercise and an easy mind ensure. I looked at my baby; there he lay peaceful and happy, for the smile of infancy was curling on his rosy lips. I kissed his forehead gently lighted the night-lamp on the hearth, and left the apartment again, to ascertain that the doors and casements were fastened, a precaution I had never taken before.

I found all secured, and determined to retire to bed. Once or twice the terrier had growled, and started from his mat; but if any thing moved without, the dog alone could hear it. It was foolish to yield the mastery to uneasy thoughts, and tremble at a ruffian's threats, equally vague and boastful, and which he wanted power and courage to redeem. I extinguished the taper, unclosed a casement looking towards the mountains, and in a few moments the bracing effects of the cold breeze restored my usual tranquillity.

It was a sweet and quiet scene. The little garden stretched downwards to the rivulet, whose

waters, sparkling in the clear starlight, with a murmuring sound fell over a ledge of rock, and plunged sullenly into a deep basin which their own restless action had worn in the river-bed. On the left, the dark hedges of the orchard shut in the view; while on the right the farm-yard, with its corn stacks and ample pile of fuel for the winter, gave a peculiar character of comfort and plenty to the prospect afforded from the window. I was about to shut the casement, when once more the dog exhibited uneasiness, and uttered an impatient whine.

duced. Why then should I break Harley's rest with a tale of idle apprehension? The shadow might be that of a tree—a passing cloud—ay, or the mere coinage of my own heated imagination, and though under my renewed excitement it would be useless to retire to bed, I decided that it would be unkind to deprive my protector of that tranquil rest which my own fears alone prevented me from sharing. Thus resolved, I secured the lattice carefully and lighted my candle again.

A newspaper—a thing of infrequent recurrence—had reached us late that evening. Harley was sleepy, I engaged with my child, and, in consequence the cover remained unbroken. I opened it now; reading would while away an hour, and lead me from thoughts that were most harassing. I skimmed over many trifling occurrences lightly, when suddenly, my whole attention was rivetted by a paragraph headed “Dreadful Murder.” At the first glance my blood curdled, and I seemed under a horrid

fascination, until I read over the whole detail. The narrative ran briefly thus :

“ Two sailors were journeying from a northern seaport—one, an aged man, just landed from a long voyage, had been paid his arrears of wages, and, with a full purse and large bundle, was proceeding to an inland village to visit his relations there. It would appear that he was not acquainted with the road, for he mentioned in several places where they had stopped for refreshment, that the stranger who accompanied him had been hired as a guide. This man was

traced and overtaken, and only by a miracle escaped from his followers, dropping the sailor's bundle, and throwing away the jacket he had taken from his victim. In the pocket the dead man's purse was found.

“It was further ascertained that the murderer was a gipsy named Michael Cooper, who had been driven long since from the gang for stabbing a companion in a brawl. Latterly he had led a solitary life, and, as it was believed, one of continued crime. One hundred pounds were now offered for his apprehension, and as he was known to be skulking on the borders of Cumberland, there was little doubt but he would be speedily brought to justice.”

Such was the intelligence the newspaper communicated. And had that murderous villain, not six hours since, been within a knife's distance of me and my sweet boy? I shuddered with horror—a new impulse came over me—that tale of blood had given my fears another bent. I would not be absent from Harley and my child—no,

not for a single moment. I put the taper out, and hurried to the sleeping-chamber.

There lay the father and the child, wrapped in as careless dreaming as if crime and suffering were banished from the world. The calm deep breathing of infancy, contrasted with the stormier sleep of manhood—for Harley in fancy was on the hills, and in low mutterings cheered his greyhounds on the deer. His arm was flung naked above the bed coverings, and, with a woman's pride, I gazed upon its light and sinewy proportions, while on his sleeping brow I could read

bed when frightful dreams disturbed me. Of course, waking or sleeping, Michael was the demon that pursued me. I woke in horrible affright. Harley was slumbering carelessly at my side, and I thought my alarm must have been a fantasy. I strove to sleep again—was it nightmare?—my breathing was impeded, and a sickening weight pressed upon my lungs and stopped their exercise. I tried to recal myself to perfect recollection. It was the deep hour of night, the lamp was waning on the hearth, and yet the chamber was bright as if a flood of moonlight filled it. A strange and crackling noise fell on my ear. What could this be? I sprang from the bed, flung aside the curtains, and, heavens and earth! all was in a blaze! and dwelling and farm-yard, although totally unconnected, were breaking into one red flame, and simultaneously in a dozen places. My first acts were to wake my lover, and catch up my sleeping child; a dense and smothering vapour vollied into the room, and when the door was opened, the outward chamber was nearly filled with smoke. It was strange

that Harley was so difficult to awake, and for a time after he hardly comprehended the danger. His recollection returned slowly ; but when it did, all his energies burst out. He woke like a person from a trance, dashed aside the fastenings of door and window, and placing me and my child beneath the temporary shelter of a garden shed, carried out sufficient clothing and bed-coverings to secure us from the cold.

It was a sorry sight—the flames raged with ungovernable violence, and what a few hours before was a sweet and comfortable abode, would

was ready. From the ruins we saved some valuables and clothing. The cattle, by Harley's desperate efforts were secured; and with two hundred pounds in the banker's and the relics of the fire, we commenced the world anew.

* * * * *

We removed to a small village on the coast, and it was surprising with what resolution Harley bore his misfortunes, and submitted to the altered mode of living our reduced means imposed. For six months we exercised the strictest economy; and it was required; for the trifling property saved from the fire was nearly exhausted. It was time that some future mode of obtaining a livelihood was procured, but what course was one like Harley to adopt?—one who from boyhood had enjoyed a competency, and been accustomed to the ease and idleness that mark a soldier's life at home. Were he alone, and obliged to seek a new opening into life, the task would be comparatively easy; but unfortunately, his fortunes were linked to mine, and he was burdened with an infant and its

mother. Many plans were devised only to be rejected ; nothing was yet determined, when fortune did her worst and left us in a moment destitute. The banker in whose hands the remnant of our means was lodged failed, and we were completely beggared.

It is impossible to conceive the misery this unexpected calamity occasioned ; and it was rendered still more poignant, by the exertions we both made to conceal from the other the anguish that each suffered in secret. A few weeks dragged heavily on, and I observed that many trifles

To witness the concealed agony of a brave man is heart-rending, and I dared not fix my eyes on his. The morning meal—the last we had the means to procure—was over, and Harley rose to take his customary ramble after breakfast.

“Ellen,” he said, as he kissed me with unusual tenderness, “Cheer up, all may yet be well. There is a person in the next town from whom I can procure some money, and before evening I shall be back. Promise that in my absence you will not grieve; for to know that *you* are wretched, can only make *me* more so.”

I tried to smile, and endeavoured to assume the look of happiness, although, God knows, my heart was wellnigh breaking. I was anxious to question him; but, probably to evade what must have been painful explanations, he hastened his departure, and took the road leading to the nearest garrison.

This circumstance partially relieved my apprehensions. There might be some old companion in the regiment quartered in the neighbourhood,

and from him Harley would naturally ask a loan. If he succeeded, we might yet escape the dreadful penury that was impending; and as hope is buoyant to the last, I waited confidently for the promised hour of his return.

Evening came, and so did my protector. I flew to him—he caught me to his heart and covered my cheeks with kisses. Pointing to a small basket which he had carried from the town, he desired me to open it. I did so. It contained some excellent provisions, and what for many a month had been a stranger to our table—a flask

He smiled, poor soul! I never saw any thing so ghastly.

“Yes, Ellen; he never demurred one moment. And you shall be the banker; ay, and a more faithful one than the last I trusted.”

His unearthly laughter startled me, while he threw some twenty pounds into my lap.

“What a supply! George. Take courage; ere this be gone, you and I will have the means of earning a living honestly.”

“Indeed, Ellen!”

“Yes—why should young and devoted hearts despair? The old and cowardly may despond; not you and I, George!”

“Well said. See how soundly our baby sleeps. Was not my supply a welcome one?”

“Oh, yes. But—but—”

“Go on, Ellen.”

“Forgive me, Harley. How came it?”

“Honestly; ay, honestly, by heaven!”

“You borrowed it?”

“No; it is all mine.”

“ You make me very wretched. Whence came this money ? ”

He rose and strode across the chamber, pressed his hand across his forehead, and with a gesture of despair, pointed to his hat. I sprang forward and seized it; and a gay cockade, with flaunting ribbons, fell upon the floor. The secret was told. Harley had procured food and money by enlisting.

* * * * *

I weary you; details of poverty and distress

cannot interest, and I shall rapidly pass over

THE CAPTAIN'S STORY.

... when our regiment was ordered
expedition of Sir John Moore, the
captain of light infantry was a sergeant.
His military proficiency would have
some suspicion, had he not stated that
served in the Irish militia—a body from
the minutest soldiers were then supplied
men of the line.

In the middle of October we disembarked
Corunna, and after many delays and
marches entered Salamanca. To the
that wretched campaign, you Major
are no stranger. It was indeed a
takes—operating with feeble allies—
false information—advancing to-day—
morrow—with every thing to harass,
to excite the soldier—until, at last,
and ill-planned expedition terminated in a
retreat.

Harley was attached to the
and, of course, was generally
guard. Yet I never was from
light infantry,
with the rear
him for a night

and notwithstanding the dreadful weather, with want of food and shelter, my child bore all bravely. By accidents unnecessary to detain you with, I amassed a considerable sum of money; and, as we were retiring towards the sea, I began to hope that on our return to England, an humble competency might again be ours. Alas! those whom I loved were never permitted to revisit their fatherland.

After the brilliant cavalry affair at Sahagen, a movement was intended against Soult on the

They tore me from the body. . . Never was ~~and~~ a humble soldier more beloved and regretted than my protector. Some of his companions assisted me to lay him in a corner of the vineyard, and, to gratify me, they turned a few turfs with their bayonets, and gave him, at least, the semblance of a grave.

I knew not how I got on afterwards for some days. Harley had hitherto supported my fainting courage, and, while he lived, I did not yield to despair. He was gone, and hope and courage seemed buried in his grave. Still

battle were being made, for Sir John Moore had determined to retreat no further.

Notwithstanding the British were suffering from cold, and wet, and hunger, they fell into position with alacrity. The Minho protected their right, and a ravine separated them from the French, who already in force occupied the heights, and were evidently preparing for an immediate and determined effort. It was made and defeated. Though the enemy attacked furiously, the bayonets of the light companies bore back their daring assailants, and they were repelled from the position with slaughter. Darkness came on—a wild and stormy night, a bare hill, no fire, no food, such was the bivouac of Lugo—such the wretched and cheerless situation of the harassed but unconquerable islanders!

As the morning of the 8th dawned, the British formed line, and prepared coolly for the expected encounter; but it passed over, and the enemy made no hostile movement. The troops

were ordered to bivouac as they best could, and, in a short time, a number of rude huts were erected to defend them from the inclemency of the coming night.

But it was not intended to remain longer before Lugo. When darkness hid their retreat, the British filed off silently by the rear. Through a frightful storm of hail and wind, their march was bravely executed—and leaving Lugo and Valmela behind them, they halted at Betanzos on the 10th.

respite from suffering, and hope dawned in many a bosom once more. The hardships of the retreat were almost ended—the sea was near—the fleet were hourly expected. The weather suddenly cleared up and, as if to omen better things, the sun again shone brilliantly. It was strange to observe the magical effect which all this produced; battalions, yesterday scattered and disheartened, rallied round their colours; the army, during the last days of the retreat, at times frightfully insubordinate and disorganised into a mighty wreck, once more resumed its discipline; and the appearance of the brigades, as they defiled in column along the Corunna road, was worthy of that gallant army, which full of life and hope and bravery, had three months since debarked, little suspecting how brief and disastrous the campaign would be.

The following nights were passed in comparative tranquillity. I slept in the village of **Pedro**; and though my accommodations were

“ You make me very wretched. Whence came this money ? ”

He rose and strode across the chamber, pressed his hand across his forehead, and with a gesture of despair, pointed to his hat. I sprang forward and seized it; and a gay cockade, with flaunting ribbons, fell upon the floor. The secret was told. Harley had procured food and money by enlisting.

* * * * *

I weary you; details of poverty and distress

tunn, when our regiment was attached to the expedition of Sir John Moore, the quondam captain of light infantry wore a sergeant's stripes. His military proficiency would have occasioned some suspicion, had he not stated that he had served in the Irish militia—a body from which the smartest soldiers were then supplied to regiments of the line.

In the middle of October we disembarked at Corunna, and after many delays and tedious marches entered Salamanca. To the disasters of that wretched campaign, you, Major O'Connor, are no stranger. It was indeed a tissue of mistakes—operating with feeble allies—acting on false information—advancing to-day, retiring to-morrow—with every thing to harass, and nothing to excite the soldier—until, at last, the ill-fated and ill-planned expedition terminated in a ruinous retreat.

Harley was attached to the light infantry, and, of course, was generally with the rear guard. Yet I never was from him for a night,

and notwithstanding the dreadful weather, with want of food and shelter, my child bore all bravely. By accidents unnecessary to detain you with, I amassed a considerable sum of money; and, as we were retiring towards the sea, I began to hope that on our return to England, an humble competency might again be ours. Alas! those whom I loved were never permitted to revisit their fatherland.

After the brilliant cavalry affair at Sahagun, a movement was intended against Soult on the

followers. The waters were increasing, the rain fell in torrents, the east wind blew with cutting violence, mules kicked, men cursed, and women screamed; all, in short, was noise and disorder. Fortunately a contiguous ford was declared practicable. The infantry and their equipages passed safely; and before the flood rose so high as to bar their passage, the whole column were safe upon the right bank.

The French pursuit was marked by the fiery character of their emperor. He crossed the Carpentanos regardless of obstacles that would have discouraged the boldest, and in a hurricane of sleet and hail passed his army over the Guadarama, by a rout declared impracticable even to a mountain peasant. This bold operation, worthy of the conqueror of Italy, was followed up by an immediate advance. The English hussars were sharply attacked upon the Esla by the cavalry of Lefebvre, but they gallantly repulsed them; and the British, with little molestation, retreated through Astorga,

taking the Camino Real; while the enemy moving by the road of Ponteferrada, arrived on the 1st at Bernbibre. Why repeat to one who witnessed them, scenes in which he shared? Why?—but to prove how deeply and indelibly every occurrence of that disastrous campaign is imprinted on my heart.

Regardless of the dreadful inclemency of the weather, I had kept as closely to my protector as the presence of the French advance would permit. The year opened on us bivouacked on

under a beech, and we spent the night of the

guard followed, and the dreary march was resumed. The French, as usual, were close to us; but as yet, they had only worried the patrols with constant alarms, and been contented with picking off any sick men or stragglers who fell behind. The column had just passed Calcabelos, where the two great roads unite, when, encouraged by some appearance of confusion among the piquets, General Colbert suddenly charged with his dragoons, and a sharp affair ensued. The light troops returned to sustain the piquets, and having occupied the vineyards that commanded the roads, opened a shattering fire. The struggle was short but sanguinary, and ended in the repulse of the assailants. Harley, always foremost in a skirmish, involved himself in the hottest combat which took place round the French commander. General Colbert was killed in the *mélée*, and my protector, shot through the heart, died in the very act of seizing on his prisoner!

* * * * *

They tore me from the body. . Never was ~~an~~ humble soldier more beloved and regretted than my protector. Some of his companions assisted me to lay him in a corner of the vineyard, and, to gratify me, they turned a few turfs with their bayonets, and gave him, at least, the semblance of a grave.

I knew not how I got on afterwards for some days. Harley had hitherto supported my fainting courage, and, while he lived, I did not yield to despair. He was gone, and hope and courage seemed buried in his grave. Still

battle were being made, for Sir John Moore had determined to retreat no further.

Notwithstanding the British were suffering from cold, and wet, and hunger, they fell into position with alacrity. The Minho protected their right, and a ravine separated them from the French, who already in force occupied the heights, and were evidently preparing for an immediate and determined effort. It was made and defeated. Though the enemy attacked furiously, the bayonets of the light companies bore back their daring assailants, and they were repelled from the position with slaughter. Darkness came on—a wild and stormy night, a bare hill, no fire, no food, such was the bivouac of Lugo—such the wretched and cheerless situation of the harassed but unconquerable islanders!

As the morning of the 8th dawned, the British formed line, and prepared coolly for the expected encounter; but it passed over, and the enemy made no hostile movement. The troops

were ordered to bivouac as they best could, and, in a short time, a number of rude huts were erected to defend them from the inclemency of the coming night.

But it was not intended to remain longer before Lugo. When darkness hid their retreat, the British filed off silently by the rear. Through a frightful storm of hail and wind, their march was bravely executed—and leaving Lugo and Valmela behind them, they halted at Betanzos on the 10th.

respite from suffering, and hope dawned in many a bosom once more. The hardships of the retreat were almost ended—the sea was near—the fleet were hourly expected. The weather suddenly cleared up and, as if to omen better things, the sun again shone brilliantly. It was strange to observe the magical effect which all this produced; battalions, yesterday scattered and disheartened, rallied round their colours; the army, during the last days of the retreat, at times frightfully insubordinate and disorganized into a mighty wreck, once more resumed its discipline; and the appearance of the brigades, as they defiled in column along the Corunna road, was worthy of that gallant army, which full of life and hope and bravery, had three months since debarked, little suspecting how brief and disastrous the campaign would be.

The following nights were passed in comparative tranquillity. I slept in the village of Pallavio; and though my accommodations were

most wretched, the amended state of the weather and a feeling that I was secure, made me rest soundly as one left alone in the world could hope to do. My boy, whose fading cheek gave silent but certain indications that his feeble strength was unequal to the privations and fatigue he had encountered, appeared to rally unexpectedly; and it was now scarcely doubtful but he would survive and revisit his fatherland. That morning I had obtained food of a better description than we had for some time.

I set out with some other stragglers for Corunna. . . As usual, I fixed my infant in a pannier on the mule, and the valuables I had saved with such difficulty were deposited in the other basket. A sum of money, in English gold, I had concealed effectually on my person. It was a lovely morning for the season of the year; the sky of summer-blue was cloudless; my heart felt as if it had lost a portion of its weight, and as I urged the mule on, I occupied my thoughts in devising plans for the future settlement of my boy and myself when we should have landed safely in England. I looked into the pannier—the child was sleeping, and in sleep how like his gallant father! The sun beamed on his eyes—I stooped to arrange the coverings of the basket. Suddenly the ground rocked—a dense mass of black ashes rose to the sky from the heights behind, and with a tremendous crash, as if occasioned by the ruin of a world, the air was darkened—the earth shook—more I know not. I was struck down

upon my face, and lay where I fell in a state of total insensibility, how long I cannot guess.

I woke as from a dream—it was already twilight—two dead soldiers were stretched at my side, and I could not for a considerable time remember where I was. With restored memory, my first care was to find my child. Where was he?—the mule—the boy? Oh God! gone—gone! lost—irrecoverably lost!

* * * * *

I wandered in a state of madness, but chance

cannot even conjecture. I remember fainting on the beach, and when I recovered, found myself with many a widowed female less wretched, crowded in a transport; and the harbour of Cerunna fading from my sight in the haze of a winter evening. I learned afterwards that my escape was purely accidental. A drunken comrade of poor Harley recognised me where I lay, and flung me into a boat; and without any exertion of my own, I was saved, while hundreds were abandoned."

Just then, O'Connor's pretty guide entered the copse, and the Gipsy rose and met her. A few whispered sentences conveyed the intelligence she brought; the girl immediately retired, and Ellen rejoined the soldier.

"We are likely to be interrupted," she said, "and I fear my wretched memoir must remain, for the present, unfinished. Has it interest enough to tempt you to the churchyard at midnight? You march to-morrow, and I should wish to bid you farewell."

O'Connor was deeply attentive while the Gipsy told her harrowing adventures. He made a feeble effort at hilarity, and with a forced smile accepted her invitation to another interview.

“Farewell, Ellen. At midnight we meet again.”

She pointed out the road to the village, joined the young gipsy who waited for her at a short distance, and gliding into the thicket left the soldier once more alone.

PRINCE HENRY. We must all to the wars.
FALSTAFF. Now comes in the sweetest morsel of the
night.

PRINCE HENRY.

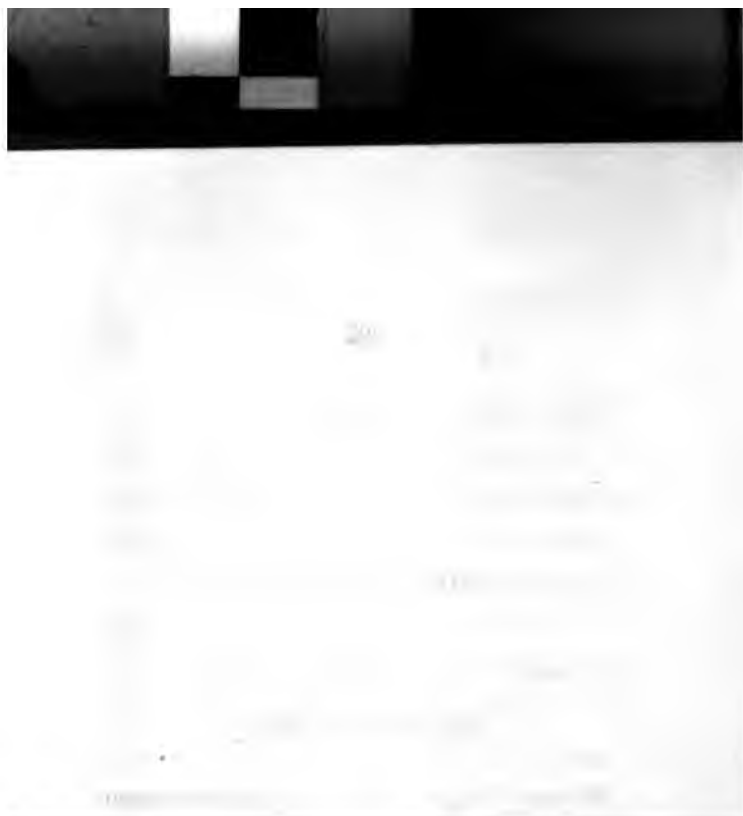
THE MESS-TABLE.

PRINCE HENRY. We must all to the wars.

1st Part, HENRY IV.

FALSTAFF. Now comes in the sweetest morsel of the
night.

Ibid.



CHAPTER VIII.

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THE MESS-TABLE.

WHEN O'Connor returned to the Greyhound he found his companions sitting at their wine. Phillips was not there; his absence was a relief; and though little inclined to share the revelry of the mess-table, still to prevent his unusual absence from dinner being remarked, and while the tedious hours away that must intervene before his appointed interview in the churchyard, he entered the room, and took his customary place. The senior captain, a countryman of his own, presided; and judging from the joviality of the merry group that surrounded him, O'Brien had circulated the bottle gallantly.

Unlike Phillips, the worthy president was in wild excitement at the certainty of a move to the Peninsula; and the sparkling eyes and cheerful countenances of all around, told that there was no heart there that did not beat with a soldier's ardour, hailing the arrival of the moment when they should meet a brave and chivalrous foe. O'Connor, with a leader's pride, remarked this martial enthusiasm. With one or two exceptions, all these had just entered on their military careers, with the buoyancy of hope which warms the

young adventurer when he first bursts upon the

loved the major with honest affection ; he looked at his well-earned fame with national pride ; and while he despised Phillips in his soul, O'Connor, according to his estimation, was the *beau idéal* of what a soldier should be. The appearance of the gallant captain was every inch Milesian. He was a tall, muscular, jovial-looking fellow ; one, as he expressed it himself, who " took all as the Lord sent it, and did not care a brass button for what the morrow brought." Shrewd, witty, and sarcastic, he seized on the ridiculous at once. Ardent in his likings and antipathies, he was indifferent in expressing his opinions of men and things so far as regarded consequences. Vain of his country to absurdity, he adopted a phraseology and mannerism so peculiar, as to entirely prohibit any possibility of mistake, touching his being a native of the emerald island.

" I am glad to see you," was his address to the Major on his entrance. " I feared that you were going to leave us to find our own way to the Douro. We have lost Phillips, I hear. We

have lost a nice man certainly, and the dragoons have got one. Well, the Lord's will be done; and if he was twice as valuable, they are welcome to him; for he was only thrown away on us. Fill your glass, Tom, and let's hear of our acquaintances who else has hopped the twig."

The young ensign it appeared, had been reading the monthly obituary from the last army list that had been just received, when O'Connor's entrance interrupted him, and he resumed his task.

"Augustus Koffmann King's German Le

counsellor when I left college for my present christian-like profession. You're gone; and a better cribbage-player never pegged a game, nor fairer drinker stretched calf-skin below mahogany."

"Was he clever in his profession?" inquired the assistant-surgeon, in broad Scotch.

"Clever? Oh, it's he that was. I never knew one of your calling that could hold a candle to Peter Fogarty."

"He made wonderful cures, I suppose?" said Sandy Anderson.

"Cures!" exclaimed Captain O'Brien; "I have known him remove a complicated disease of head, heart, and stomach, without drug or draught, but a teaspoonful of tooth-powder."

"Indeed!" said the major smiling, "Why Sandy himself could not pretend to match Mr. Fogarty."

"Hoot, man; that's not to be believed!"

"It is true, however, Sandy," replied the captain. "George, order a grilled bone, and,

during the broiling, I'll tell you the story. Heigh-ho ! how fast time flies. Then was I like a young bear, with my troubles all before me. Come, boys ; fill to the memory of poor Peter ; and though I must necessarily record some portion of my own history and virtues, if modesty does not choke me, I'll give you the detail."

The president was obeyed, a full and solemn bumper was drunk to the honour of the departed doctor, and Captain O'Brien thus proceeded :

DOCTOR. The heart is sorely charged.
 GENT. I would not have such a heart in my bosom,
 for the dignity of the whole body.
 DOCTOR. Well—well—well.
 GENT. Pray God it be, sir.
 DOCTOR. This disease is beyond my practice.

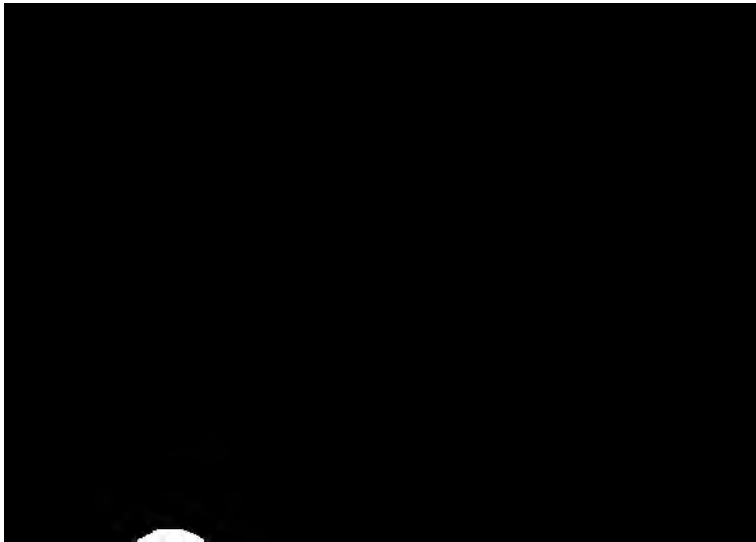
THE CAPTAIN'S STORY.

If I had a thousand sons, the first human principle I would teach them, should be—to forswear thin potations, and addict themselves to sack.

2d Part, HENRY IV.

DOCTOR. The heart is sorely charged.
 GENT. I would not have such a heart in my bosom,
 for the dignity of the whole body.
 DOCTOR. Well—well—well.
 GENT. Pray God it be, sir.
 DOCTOR. This disease is beyond my practice.

MACBETH.



CHAPTER IX.

THE CAPTAIN'S STORY.

AH! God be with you old Trinity. Green is your memory, and fondly do I recal the merry days and jovial nights I passed within your honoured precincts. You were then a seat of learning fit for a prince, and take you all in all, a pattern for colleges at large. In many a stiff hurling-match and heavy drink have I shared with as true Corinthians, as ever slept upon the guard-bed of a watchhouse, or tossed a bailiff in a blanket. Companions of my youth—where are they now? Stretched beneath the sward of some half-forgotten field, or gone to

their account by the certain, though less sudden maladies, to which the flesh is heir.

My father was a true Milesian. He had a long pedigree and a light purse, for hounds and horses were "the spoil" of him. He lived as a gentleman should live; and died after a grand-jury dinner, drinking Baron Botherem to a stand-still, although the worthy justice could carry off his fourth bottle, and sentence a malefactor next morning, as steadily as a christian judge should do.

my father fancied I had talents, and it was his pleasure to destine me for the bar. The bar, Michael Prendergast opined I would in good time reach, and that, too, by a less expensive road than the one proposed by my sire—concluding his observations with, “Never mind; push him, the devil, into college any how. Bigger boobies have cut a figure there before now.”

Well! the point was carried; Tom and I entered the university, and we were consigned to the care of Doctor Blundell, as dry a professor as ever produced a thesis. Our Gamaliel was a short, stout, bullet-headed dwarf, his face so fat, and cheeks so flaccid, that *en profile*, no nose was visible, and it was necessary for him to give, at least, “a quarter front,” before the organ of smell could be discovered. His figure was in good keeping; the body resembled a porter-butt on a reduced scale, and was mounted on two thick props, whose extreme curvature obtained for the professor the *sobriquet* of

“parenthesis.” Such was the learned Theban, to whom the hopes of the O'Briens were intrusted.

Tom, from the very start, promised to be a genius of the first order; while my career, I lament to say, was rather bustling than brilliant. Indeed, Doctor Blundell declared we were, in every respect, opposite as the Antipodes. I never could comprehend the beauty of a “sorites”—mathematics were altogether beyond my reach—astronomy, in my opinion, only

“honours thick upon him.” Yet there were people in the world who considered him little better than a fool,—forgetting, that to be a philosopher a man must be dirty and eccentric. Certainly Tom had been frequently encountered in the streets with a consequential garment missing; and he puzzled a country postmaster, by requiring letters after forgetting his own name. As to his meals, they were at times totally forgotten; and in his annual migrations to and from the university, he was usually consigned to the custody of a fellow-traveller, or handed with a half-crown to the guard, and a request that he should be delivered as addressed.

It was fortunate that Tom's virtues and acquirements acted as a set-off against my delinquency. Yet my career was not unnoticed, and I contrived to obtain the marked attention of my superiors. More than once I was admitted to a conference with the board, and on account, I suppose, of the insalubrity of the city, was

recommended by those worthy personages country air for a term of six months; and that too so pressingly, that no demurrer on my part would be listened to.

Three years passed over, when one evening, returning from a tavern dinner, a row was kicked up at the gate, and a desperate assault and battery ensued. A stupid citizen knocked his head against a blackthorn stick, and the accident was so awkward as to occasion a fracture of the occiput, and give the coroner the trouble of empanelling a jury to inquire into the

note, apprised my father of the occurrence, "assured him that all hope of my ever doing good was desperate, and to evade the gallows, which he proved to a demonstration must be my end, he recommended that I should be permitted to follow my own bent, and enter the cut-throat profession, for which it was a *sequitur* that nature had intended me." Next post a letter from my father was received. He "concurred with the learned Professor; affectionately informed me that I was at liberty to go to the devil as I pleased, sent me some money, and intimated that he had applied for a commission in the militia." This was as it should be; his application was successful, and in a few days I was one of the fraternity of the sword, and duly gazetted to the — regiment.

The corps I was attached to, was at that time encamped at Leighlinstown, four or five miles from the capital; and, as in duty bound, I set out next morning to visit my commanding officer in proper form.

My father had an old acquaintance in the corps, to whose protection I was, by letter, regularly committed. Of course it was to him that I applied for an introduction to Colonel Mahony. I was graciously received by my patron, presented in due form to the commander, and until I could obtain accommodations, hospitably invited, *pro. tem.*, to take up my quarters in a corner of the hovel, which Peter Fogarty—as my patron was called—had constructed for his abiding-place while remaining

with a bull-neck and square shoulders, a small and twinkling gray eye, and a nose snubbed and efflorescent, as the nose of a man delighting in whiskey punch should be. Peter was fond of a race or cock-fight, would go twenty miles to be present at a duel, loved a rubber of whist dearly, but cribbage was his delight, cribbage was the road to his affections, and I soon discovered it.

I mentioned that my regiment was under canvass when I joined, and formed a part of some six or seven thousand men, who, pending the explosion of "ninety-eight," were encamped in the vicinity of the metropolis. The officers were generally provided with tents, but some of them had erected temporary habitations, and among the number were Colonel Mahony and his medical adviser. Indeed it was absolutely necessary that Peter's domicile should be contiguous to the commander's. From conjugal regard, the lady had accompanied the colonel to the field, although her health was but indifferent;

and the extreme delicacy of her constitution rendered the frequent attendance of Doctor Fogarty indispensable.

Peter's habitation was a wooden hut ; one end, screened from vulgar gaze by an old blanket, formed his dormitory, while the other corner was curtained off for me. The centre was used for all the purposes of the body politic. There our *déjeûné* was laid ; there, if a sick officer applied, the prescription was written ; there, when dinner ended and we left the mess-tent, on a small

were healthy; their principal infirmity being corns—a disease to which they were obnoxious, from a majority of the corps, prior to their enlistment, having considered shoes a superfluity. Yet Peter had his own troubles; for below, as schoolmen declare, there is no happiness without alloy. Woman, that source of evil, was his bane; and, as in the fulness of his heart he would acknowledge after his sixth tumbler—“but for Mrs. Mahony, he would be as happy as the day was long.”

Mrs. Mahony had been for many years a wife, but, unhappily, as yet had never been made a mother. The colonel was anxious for an heir. Hopes were frequently excited, and they were as often deferred, until the heart was sick. Yet why should Mrs. Mahony despond? her grandmother had a son at fifty-two; she was but forty-seven, and why should she despair?

All this, however, was ruinous to the peace of Doctor Fogarty. The least alarm in the day, the slightest movement after night, agitated

his interesting patient. Ether had often failed ; and even a teaspoonful of brandy at times would hardly prove a sedative. These unfortunate attacks generally took place at an advanced period of the evening, and of course Peter was required. Then the ill-starred practitioner was invariably at whist or cribbage—the colonel's batman, a foster-brother of the lady, would be despatched to our wooden habitation, and, with nine scored, and the odd trick actually in his hand, the unhappy doctor has been obliged to abandon

honour, he usually prayed from the bottom of his soul for Mrs. Mahony's repose temporal and eternal, and the sooner her beatitude was completed, he as a christian man opined would be all the better.

It was for the season a dark and blustering night. More than one tent-pole had given way—pegs and cords were tried and found wanting, and in the joy of his heart my host congratulated himself and me on the stability of our wooden dwelling. The last batch of whisky was inimitable; and so said the doctor, after submitting the liquor to a fair test of six tumblers. The cards were decidedly in his favour—fortune smiled upon him every cut—and since the night his wife had bolted, he never had been so happy. It was just ten—the deal was mine—but Peter's cards were beautiful. Suddenly a hurried foot approached the door. Peter remarked it.—“It's the lobsters after all—I knew the devil would not fail me.” Knock—knock—“Come in.” It was not the lobsters, but Murty Currigan, the

colonel's bat-man. The doctor looked dark as Erebus,—the bat-man as if he had been running for his life. The former coughed to conceal vexation. “Ha, ha—hum ;—any thing wrong?”

“Wrong? You may say that—the mistress is dying,” responded Murty.

“Dying?—What the devil would make her die?” said the doctor.

“Sorra one o'me knows,” returned the bat-man.

Now Murty Currigan being deaf, save when Peter Fogarty elevated his voice to an extraordinary pitch, his remarks touching the diagnostics

“Humph! so should mine be after a pint of brandy.”

“She’s as wake as a cat”—quoth the envoy.
“She can’t move without help.”

“Seldom people can when they’re regularly smothered”—said the leech.

“She has a sort of a twisting in her stomach,” added the fosterer.

The doctor’s patience gave way. “Arrah, badahust, ye ommadawn! * Would you give her as many ailments as would kill a priest? Off with ye, Murty. Tell them to keep her quiet, and come back in half an hour, and tell me how she is.” The bat-man vanished. “She’ll be fast asleep then, and we’ll not be troubled with her capers. Come—I lead. Fifteen two—fifteen four—a pair make six—and a pair make eight;” and on he went with the jargon of the game.

Now, though the honest doctor counted with some confidence on sleep, that “sweet mediciner,”

* *Anglice*, “Silence, you idiot!”

abating the complicated diseases with which Mrs. Mahony was afflicted, still he had sore misgivings to disturb him, and these could occasionally be detected, from his confused allusions to the patient and the game.

“Stop, Patt; let me cut. I couldn't have made more of that hand, unless we played the double flush. Your father and I always flushed. Jasus! I wonder what's come over the woman! Every night smothered; and then me tattered out, wet or dry. Asy, Patt—you're pegging too fast; let me see what I have got. Lord! if it

directed to return; and I hinted, that as the hospital tent was at some distance, the sooner Peter started for his "galenicals" the better. My remark appeared to astonish the worthy man, for he laid down his cards, and looked at me with a broad stare.

"The hospital tent! Is it to go a long half-mile, and a storm raging that would blow the buttons off my jacket? Arrah, what a *gom-mouge** ye take me for, Pat! And yet, blessed Virgin! if Murty comes again, what am I to do with him? Was there ever a dacent practitioner so teased by an ould besom as myself, Peter Fogarty? If I had but some simple for her. Oh, murder! not a squig of physick in the house, unless you have it."

I shook my head.

"Death an nouns! have ye nothing—salts, senna, cinnamon—rhubarb, scamony, magnesia!"

I nodded a negative.

* *Anglice*, a simpleton.

“ Have you no neglected draught ; nothing in the shape of powder ? ”

“ Nothing,” I replied, “ but tooth-powder.”

“ Phew ! ” and Peter whistled—“ Beautiful ! and by the best of luck I have a bottle.”

Up he rose, bolted for a moment behind the blanket, and speedily reappeared with a small phial. In it he deposited a spoonful of my dentifrice, filled it from the kettle, and shook it, as he said, “ *Secundum artem.* ” The infusion produced a liquid of bright pink, with an aromatic odour ; and Peter having submitted the mixture to the

mixture to be taken every half-hour until the patient is relieved—shaking the bottle.—For Mrs. Mahony.”

It was fortunate for Peter that his nostrum was in readiness. Before he had dealt a second hand, a loud tap at the door announced the return of the fosterer—and bad as Murty's first report was, his second bulletin was infinitely more alarming.

“ Well—is she better ? ”

“ Better ? ” repeated the fosterer with a wild stare.

“ Ay—better ! ” returned the physician in a tone of voice that mimicked Murty's like an echo.

“ Arrah ! she never was bad till now.” Said the fosterer. “ Ye can't tell a word she says, good or bad, and she wouldn't know her own maid from the black drummer.”

“ Ah ! regularly sewed up. Here,” and he handed him the bottle, “ mind the directions ; can ye read ? ”

"If I can't, sure Biddy Toole can."

"Away with ye then, every moment you lose may be fatal; bathe her feet and shake the bottle, and be sure ye tell me how she is—early in the morning."

"Any thing else, doctor?"

"Nothing—only don't let her get cold, if ye can help it, and now run ye devil!"

Murty made his salaam and vanished; and soon after, Peter and I retired to our respective cribs.

table, before a port-hole which it was his pleasure to call a window, while divers cloths and coverlets were suspended from a line stretched across the apartment, and excluded from the gaze of vulgar eyes "the lady of his love." The commander having duly apologized for detaining me a few minutes while he concluded his letter, pointed to a camp-stool—and I seated myself and took up the Evening Post. But the newspaper was unheeded—voices behind the curtain told that there were others in the chamber of state—and in the speakers I easily recognised Peter and his patient, Mrs. Mahony, while a feeble piano in a flat key, thus continued :

"Yes, doctor, I will ever acknowledge that under Providence, I owe my life to you. The first spoonful gave relief, and the second acted like a charm."

"Indeed ! Ha !—hem !—hem ! Allow me : pulse full—a *leetle* feverish—must keep very quiet."

"But, dear Mr. Fogarty, I must, you say,

be very careful to avoid cold. No doubt the medicine I took last night with such happy effect was very powerful?"

"Most powerful, madam"—replied the leech with unblushing effrontery. "The arcana of pharmaceuticals could not afford a more effective combination."

"God bless me!" ejaculated the lady, "but for it, I should have been dead."—

"As Julius Cæsar, madam"—responded the doctor, with a solemn cough.

"I have been reflecting on your advice

“ Well, as I was saying, doctor, to leave Colonel Mahony—”

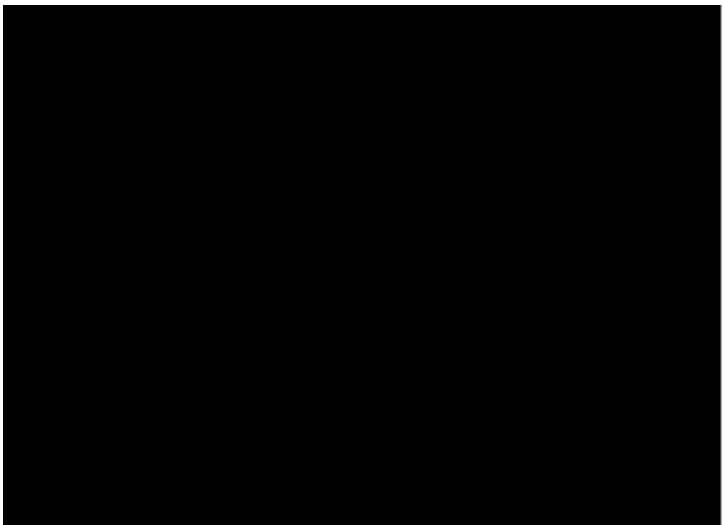
“ Madam,” returned the false physician, “ I can appreciate the strength of your attachment ; but there are other and important considerations :” and Peter dropped his voice to a half-whisper, that prevented me from hearing any thing beyond detached words. “ Delicate situation—hopes of an honourable house—colonel’s partiality for children—native air—happy result—bark and sea bathing.” And before the commander had finished his despatch the villain Peter, under false hopes, had persuaded the colonel’s helpmate to bundle off to Clare, “ by easy stages.” Whether she carried a bottle of the pink tincture in the carriage, I forget ; but, I presume, that she would hardly, when there was balm in Gilead, depart without an extensive supply.

Time passed—and four years after I had left the militia, and volunteered to the line, I had occasion to run up to London, and there

encountered my old commander in the Strand. He was a friendly little fellow, and expressed great pleasure at our meeting. I remarked that he was habited in deep mourning—and when I inquired for Mrs. Mahony, he sighed heavily, shook his head, and informed me that he had buried her a month before in Cheltenham.

“ Ah! my dear O'Brien. It was a black day when I was persuaded to leave home. Fogarty was the only man that understood poor dear Mrs. Mahony's constitution. You may remember when we lay in Leighlinstown camp

his lodgings in a hackney-coach; and on our way home, as well as I could understand him—for there was “a ripple” in his delivery—he did nothing but lament, in poor dear Mrs. Mahony’s last attack, the absence of Peter and his “pink tincture.”



THE GIPSY'S STORY CONTINUED.

Hark! to the hurried question of despair?
'Where is my child?'—an echo answers—'Where?'

BRIDE OF ABYDOS.

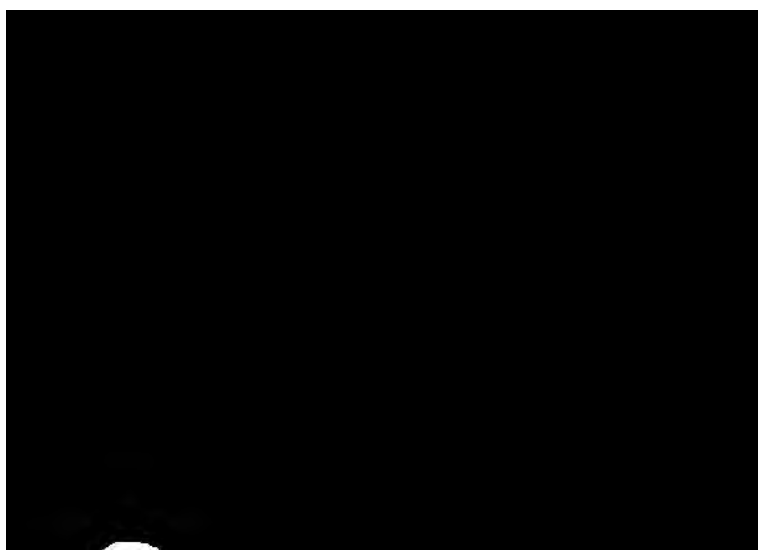
MACBETH. Is he despatched?

MURDERER. My lord, his throat is cut, that I did
for him.

SHAKSPEARE.

100

100



CHAPTER X.

THE GIPSY'S STORY CONTINUED.

THE night wore on—and in the merry group who occupied the parlour of the Greyhound there was but one heavy heart, and that was the commander's. For him there was no flavour in the wine, no point in the rapartee that “set the table in a roar,” and he waited impatiently for the hour of meeting in the churchyard, to listen to a narrative of suffering far more congenial to his present mood, than the reckless gaiety of the young spirits who surrounded him. Before midnight he stole from his companions unobserved, and reached the trysting-place unnoticed.

Ellen was not yet come ; but ere the first quarter chimed, a figure glided round a buttress of the dark building, and the Gipsy joined him under the appointed lime-tree.

“ True to your engagement, Ellen,” said the soldier ; “ but is not this a dull place to select for midnight assignations ? ”

“ Ay—and for the confession of a deed of blood ! ” said the Gipsy in a low tone of voice. “ To me there is something associated with this lonely cemetery that is sacred. Here, the ashes of the being whom I most loved, are reposing—for

“Ay—ay—there lies the fanciful distinction. Your homicides were legalized by the pleasure of some half dozen sanguinary despots. You smote the brave. I only sped the felon. But, to my tale—and it shall be a brief one:—

The remnant of the ill-fated expedition sailed for the shores of Britain. What proportion returned I know not; but were it ascertained how many perished in the field, died of fatigue, or were transferred to a French prison, the casualties of that gallant army must have been enormous. Many an afflicted family sorrowed for that disastrous campaign—many a wife and mother were “left lamenting”—but where had any been so unmercifully visited as myself? I left my native land, the beloved one of a brave man. My boy—the loveliest that ever gladdened the heart of a doting mother! The brave was sleeping on the field he died on. The boy—oh, God! where was he? My brain burns when I ponder on his unknown fate. Was he dead? and did the child of my heart heave

his last sigh on any pillow but his mother's bosom? Was he living—and if alive—what? The thought was horrible—the menial of a foreigner—the drudge of some bloated monk—the serf of a Spanish peasant—a slave!—

“Nay, the bondsman of a slave.”

God! what is death to such miserable uncertainty? What the freedom of a disembodied spirit to the grovelling existence of a bondsman's thrall?

* * * * *

calmed down ; and when I could think with some composure on my future mode of life, I determined to return to the vicarage, throw myself again upon Mr. Howard's pity, and, if he permitted it, wear out my few and evil days under the roof of my excellent protector.

When I disembarked I had little clothing left beyond the dress I wore, and it was necessary to procure a supply. Accordingly on the fourth evening, I left my lodgings for the first time, to purchase a decent outfit. The streets were crowded with drunken soldiers, who, availing themselves of the temporary license granted to their recent sufferings, with the proverbial recklessness of men "escaped from the slaughter," forgot in coarse debauchery their past hardships and lost companions. I was frequently accosted by these wanderers as I passed along ; but having succeeded in providing the articles I required, I turned my footsteps homeward. One person, an old Jew, had crossed me more than once. In the shops that I entered he, too, appeared to

have business to transact; and if he did not follow me in, I was certain to find him lounging near the door. Yet this was not very remarkable. Multitudes of Israelites had flocked to Portsmouth, in expectation of buying up the plunder of the campaign; or obtaining, for worthless considerations, from the unwary, the arrears of pay which had been given them on their landing.

At the door of the lodging-house there was a temporary delay when I knocked. I stood beneath a lamp that was suspended directly above me, and, throwing aside the mantle I had

looked quickly round—the speaker was gone, a shadow on the opposite wall floated past, and the lane was to all appearance without a living being but myself.

This last occurrence was alarming; it was quite unaccountable why the old Jew should follow, and, to judge from his exclamation, recognise me as he did. I felt a secret misgiving, and determined to hasten my departure. On inquiry, I learned that every conveyance was engaged by sick and wounded officers, hastening to revisit their respective homes. But to stay longer in Portsmouth I considered dangerous; and I resolved to proceed next morning, and beg an asylum from the worthy man, whose house I had once so unceremoniously abandoned. I made up my small wardrobe in a bundle, secured my money carefully, bade my hostess farewell, and at sunrise had cleared the streets of Portsmouth, and taken the road to the still-loved village that contained the ashes of my mother.

For two days I journeyed prosperously; nothing of any moment occurred. All day I

kept the road, and at night rested in some hamlet or farm-house. I thought it safer to avoid the towns, and although I had nothing whose loss I regarded now, my courage was sunken and my once proud spirit gone. I dreaded some nameless calamity—I feared I could not tell what—life to me was valueless, and yet there was a coward sinking of the heart, that even when rich in worldly happiness I had never felt before. No wonder that in this depressed and nervous temperament, I looked suspiciously at objects which under other feelings I should

and, as I hoped, a quiet asylum gained. I rose early and resumed my journey with more alacrity than I had hitherto exhibited; miles were accomplished, and though fatigued by unusual exertion, I persevered and still pressed forward. Evening found me on the verge of a large and dreary moor, and I half determined to turn back and rest for the night in the last hamlet I had passed, and not attempt traversing what, in the haze of evening, appeared a boundless wilderness. But to retrograde some distance would only leave more to be achieved to-morrow—and summoning resolution, I resolved at all hazards, to cross the waste, and rest in the village beyond it. I was alone—the path was wild and solitary—what then? my sex would protect me from all but the most profligate, and in a humble pedestrian like me, the robber would find nothing to excite his cupidity.

I walked briskly on, and anxious to reach my resting-place, redoubled exertions which fatigue had before abated. More than a mile of the

lonely waste was passed and nothing had occurred to alarm me; for I had seen but one straggling wood-cutter, and not a human habitation was visible. It was fortunately a bright night, for the moon was nearly full. Still I struggled onward, cheered by the thought that every step brought me nearer to a place of safety.

The road—if a passage over moorland, marked on the barren sward by the wheel-tracks of the few vehicles that traversed it, could be so termed—was intersected by another. Three paths lay before me, and which of them should I select?

· I would have given half the gold I possessed to any one who would have relieved me from this embarrassing perplexity—but there was no alternative. I must proceed; and with a heavy heart I sighed and walked on.

A sudden descent, caused by a dipping of the surface, shut out the view of the ground I had just traversed, and there appeared to be a path directly across the ravine which foot-passengers pursued, while carriages were obliged to take a leveller but more circuitous direction. Of course I selected the shorter rout—descended to the hollow, climbed the opposite ridge, and again emerged upon the heath. Scarcely had I regained the broader path when a noise caused me to look round, and immediately behind I perceived a vehicle advancing rapidly. It approached and I stopped, hoping that I should gain some information from the traveller. Heavens! it was the same tax-cart—the same driver—that for days had hung upon my footsteps, constant as an avenging spirit! I stood like one spell-bound—I

250 THE GIPSY'S STORY CONTINUED.

could not articulate a word. The stranger swept quickly by—murmured a hoarse “Good night,” and in another minute disappeared behind a patch of copsewood.

I remained rooted to the spot—my brain half crazed with terror. Should I retrace my steps? If I did, was it probable that I should recover the right path, and be able in the dull light to disengage myself from the dreary waste on which I was so unfortunately belated? Should I persevere, it was tempting fate, and following

round it point to the thirsty traveller in the desert, could not be more rapturously regarded by him, than that feeble gleam by me. I felt as if new vigour strung my limbs. *There was hope—there was safety.* That light was the beacon; and better still, the haven it showed was near. On I pressed, and in a few minutes stood before a small dilapidated dwelling, whose decayed sign-board intimated it to have been once the resting-place of travellers.

Mean and comfortless as it looked, I should have claimed its shelter with delight; but my joy was abated—my feeling of security destroyed, by perceiving the well-remembered vehicle before the door. The horse had been unharnessed, and of course, the driver was within.

There are times when even woman conquers fear. I felt that there was for me but one course left. If I returned I should be pursued; if I passed the house I should be followed and overtaken. I once had—I now have—the nerve and daring of a man; but then sorrow and suffering

had damped my energies and subdued my former spirit. There was no alternative. I taxed my courage to the uttermost, and with at least the semblance of boldness, entered the suspicious mansion.

The room I was introduced to was not ill furnished, and certainly the outward appearance of the house was far more unpromising than the interior justified. It wanted the neatness of an English inn, but it had still the look of plenty, for an abundant supply of dried meats was hanging in the chimney, and a comfortable

diminished the evil impression, which the neglected exterior of the house had first created. A quantity of game was suspended from the ceiling, and two double guns stood in a corner of the chamber. Rabbit nets, gins of various descriptions, and other matters employed in poaching, with whose uses I was well acquainted, were partially concealed beneath a chest of drawers. To judge from the appearance of the whole, I should rather pronounce the place to be the habitation of a smuggler, than a house where the traveller would seek for rest and entertainment.

My observations were speedily interrupted. Another and a very different-looking female entered; and, after surveying me with a keen and impertinent stare, announced herself to be the mistress of the mansion.

She seemed to be a woman beyond my own age, and no doubt had once been remarkably handsome; but her beauty was sadly impaired—years could not have done it, and I concluded it was more the work of dissipation

than time. She was highly rouged, showily dressed, and wore a profusion of jewellery, which from their bad combination told that quantity and not good taste was her fancy. The richness of these ornaments was far too costly for her walk of life; and it was altogether out of character to see the bustling hostess tricked out like a tragic queen. One thing my quick eye discovered,—the ornaments were genuine, and this expensive display added considerably to my alarm.

With a tone intended to be gracious she bade me welcome, and inquired what refreshment I

the mansion if possible, I requested the attendant to conduct me to a chamber. She hesitated—took a light, told me to wait a little, and left me, as she said, to speak to her mistress. I heard her as the door was ajar. To her question the hostess replied: "The back room—if it is ready," and next moment the maid returned, and beckoned me to follow.

The upper story of the inn was dirty and uncomfortable. I passed several rooms, and the last in the lobby, as it would appear, had been the one selected for my accommodation, but a glance at the door was quite sufficient to determine me against becoming its occupant. The others had nothing remarkable to attract the eye, but mine was provided with two strong bolts, while on the inside, there was no fastening but a common latch. The bed and furniture were not inviting, and I observed that the window was grated closely. Without permitting the attendant to observe any change in my

manner, I returned with her to the lower chamber, and presently supper was laid.

God knows, I had no appetite for the meal; but I ate—drank some ale—and managed to suppress every symptom of distrust. From the maid, who appeared a simple rustic, I found out the direction to the next hamlet, and ascertained that it was but two miles distant, and that the road was easily found. This was all I wanted—the sooner I set out the better—I requested the attendant to bring in my reckoning, and prepared to start on my hazardous expedition.

were urged in vain, and again I asked, "what I had to pay for my entertainment?"—"To pay!" she exclaimed with a scornful stare—"a poor traveller like thee cannot be overburdened with money, and I can afford a supper." I thanked her for her kindness, lifted my bundle, and bade her "good night." She followed to the door, and renewed her entreaties to remain.

"And *will* you go?" she said. I replied that I was determined.

"I wish you safe," she continued with a sneer; "stouter travellers have taken the road, and never reached their destination!"

She turned in, closed the door, and I found myself once more upon the waste.

During my short sojourn at the inn, the night had changed, and the sky indicated an approaching storm. The breeze, in unsteady gusts, came moaning across the moorland—the moon was occasionally hidden—and on the edge of the horizon faint lightnings played, followed by the hoarse murmurings of distant thunder. All fore-

258 THE GIPSY'S STORY CONTINUED.

told a coming tempest, and I hurried on to reach some place of shelter, before its fury burst upon me.

Even in this desolate place and trying hour one circumstance prevented my heart from sinking ; I had left the mysterious traveller behind, and the vehicle which had caused me such repeated alarms, was standing before the alehouse door, if an alehouse that suspicious dwelling was. As yet no serious impediment had appeared ; the road was circuitous but easily found out ; and though the moon was frequently obscured by

me to new exertion. I entered the brake—shrubs and copse skirted the path. Was it the right one? I raised my eyes and looked at the finger-post. Heavens!—it was a gibbet—time-worn and decayed—but still a fragment of the murderer was swinging from its shattered arm; and the blanched skull and bare bones rattled in the night wind, as the unsteady gust struck them in its passage.

I nearly lost my senses. I have crossed a battle-field days after the work of death had ended, when the unburied slain, stripped of all covering, tinged with the blueness of corruption, and swollen to unnatural size, lay thick around; but that fleshless felon was the most horrible spectacle that ever blasted my sight!

I dared not look a second time but rushed madly into the copse. The moon shone forth again, and I found myself in a small glade, shut out from that hideous and disgusting memorial of a murder. Almost exhausted, I stopped for a moment to breathe. A man's hand

was laid upon my shoulder. I shrieked and sprang forward: the Jew was at my side!

“Mercy!” — I cried — “Mercy! I have gold; take it freely, but do not murder me.”

The stranger remained silent; and from beneath the shading of a hood attached to his horseman's cloak, I could remark eyes of uncommon brilliancy fixed on mine.

“Spare me,” I continued, “wretched as a lone wanderer may seem to be, I have more gold than those of wealthier appearance.”

A smothered and sarcastic laugh was the only

off his riding-cloak—and as it fell upon the ground, exclaimed in a voice that made me tremble—

“Does Reuben Woolfe the Jew, bear any similitude to Michael Cooper the Gipsy?”

“Michael!” I replied with a shudder—“and has justice not yet overtaken the spiller of blood?”

“Look at me,” was his answer, “and it will be idle to reply. I am here. No longer the hunted gipsy, but more powerful than any member of the same people has been, since they left their eastern birthplace to wander among the nations of the north.”

“What want you with me?” I asked firmly. “I have offered gold and you reject it. Unhand me. I must—I will proceed.”

“Must and will,” returned the gipsy, “are gallant words—but here, I suspect, they are idly used. Once you were in my power, and fortune enabled you to leave and scorn me. Miracles are of rare occurrence. The arm that smote

me is cold. Were it not, I have means now which then I wanted, to make thy rescuer wail the hour when he roused my vengeance."

"He never feared you, Michael—and he is now beyond mortal enmity."

"So much the better for both. Ellen, your fate hangs upon a breath. Hear and decide."

I listened to the gipsy chief in breathless astonishment. The coldness of his unimpassioned address made me tremble ; for a villain's calmness is more to be dreaded than the fury of the brave. He thus continued :

shall not say what you are now. Hear what my career has been.

“There are in this country men of action and intelligence—no matter what the world calls them. I joined them in my hour of danger, and passed among them for a Jew: my face required but the addition of a beard, and that was easily effected. Short as my connexion with them has been, I am now a leader of the body, and direct a confederacy that spreads itself over half the island, and defies the law and its myrmidons to break it up. Others are the tools, and I the agent. All connected with the body, from the smuggler to the house-breaker, are under my control; and though they never know from whom the order comes, they are obedient to the mandate of those, of whose names and abodes they are in total ignorance. We procure intelligence—we arrange the plans—and it is their business to carry our orders into execution. Enough of what I am. A few years of success will render me wealthier than ever

any of our tribe has even dreamed of being. I will then retire to another country. What will not gold do? My gipsy blood may hereafter circulate in the veins of the proudest noble of the land of my adoption. Ellen you know me. Ambition has chalked the path out—and stern resolution shall not be wanted to sweep aside every obstacle that would bar me in my bold career.”

I listened in breathless amazement to the soaring projects of the low-born ruffian. The moon shone brightly out. Fired at the picture

of a hated rival repaid by blood and misery. When the lost child was smiling in your arms, as you sate before the cottage door, and I was constrained to beg an alms to save me from starvation—did you then guess what its fate would be? Or, as you turned an eye of womanly pride towards his handsome father from the abject wretch who was then beholden to your bounty, did you dream, that I, despised and wretched as I was, had doomed my enemy to death?”

The allusion to my child and his brave father, roused my spirit, and I found the blood once more flush my cheek.

“*You* doom him to death!” I exclaimed. “No, Michael! had you crossed his path, Harley would have crushed you like a worm. No; my loved one died on the battle-field, sword in hand, as the brave should only die. While you, like yonder murderer, will blanch upon a gibbet.”

“And did I not effect his death?” he said, with a bitter sneer. “Who drove him to the

battle-field on which he fell? Listen, and judge. I found you surrounded with plenty—you had a lover and a child—a home and independence. I visited you—in four days the cottage was a ruin—the corn-stacks dispersed in ashes to the winds. Whose hand fired house and barn, Ellen?”—and he grasped mine with painful force—“That hand holds yours!”

“Execrable ruffian!”—I exclaimed. “Your boast is indeed too true. You drove us into penury, and death and misery came after.”

“Well,” he replied; “my vengeance is now

I was mute with terror and astonishment. If apprehension from his hatred had alarmed me, the avowal of his love was infinitely more revolting; and a thrill of horror rushed to my heart, as I plucked my hand from his.

“Your bride!—the bride of Harley’s murderer! Wretch! before the lips that felt his kisses should be contaminated by a monster like thee, I would stab myself!”

“Ellen,” he answered coolly, “this is mere girlish trifling, and suited to neither the time or place. We are waited for. I told them before I left the house, to prepare a better supper than what was offered you. Come—it may spoil. You and I know each other too well to make further fooling necessary.”

My situation was very desperate. In the power of one so cold and merciless—resolute in purpose, immoveable in temper—threats or supplications with such a man were equally unavailing. Even then, in that dreadful extremity, my spirit bore

me up; and I resolved to resist the villain—ay, even to the death.

“Michael,” I said, “you have a man’s strength, and there lies your only superiority; for in determination I am your equal. Let me pass. If there be a spark of manly spirit in your bosom, you will not harm the woman who asks your pity. You cannot bend me to your will. No—by heaven!—though you should murder me.”

“And this would be a fitting place for such a deed,” the villain continued, in the same calm tone. “You marked the gibbet hard by. Had

discovery. The result was, that next morning the wench was found where the gibbet stands, with a fractured skull. He managed the matter clumsily, and was hanged; and, a few yards off, all that remains of him are a few bare bones shivering in the night-breeze. Come, Nell, let us be moving."

Seizing my arm, he pulled me some yards along the path; but mustering my whole strength, I disengaged myself from his grasp, and rushed wildly towards the direction in which I thought the village lay. But escape was hopeless;—in a moment I was overtaken, and locked closely in the ruffian's arms. A final struggle ensued—he to retain, and I to break away. Just then the sky appeared to open—every thing around was revealed distinctly as at noon-tide—the vivid flash was followed by a crash of thunder, loud and prolonged, as if it announced the ruin of a world.

"Hold—Michael!" I exclaimed. "Hold; hear you not the voice of heaven? Forbear!"

His reply was too blasphemous to be repeated. It told my doom—death or insult awaited me! In vain I screamed—in vain I supplicated the scoundrel's pity. My voice died away unheard over the dreary waste, my prayers were unregarded, my strength failed, my limbs tottered, my breath was lost.

“Now comes Michael's triumph!” he muttered, as he grasped me tighter. Another flash lightened the copse—another crash burst over our heads. For a second the poniard in the villain's belt sparkled. I caught at the handle

was sticking in his throat, his eyes were open, and as flash after flash came volleying from the heavens, I thought he was grinning at me in deadly but impotent rage. Presently I felt a revulsion to the heart, leaped from the ground, and rushed wildly from the scene of slaughter.

* * * *

For a long interval I remember nothing. They found me in the morning roaming through the hamlet, and my senses totally fled. A wounded officer fortunately was on leave of absence there. He recognized me, told the story of my sufferings during the retreat, interested the villagers on my behalf, and had me carefully attended to. My ravings, as I was afterwards told, were frightful, but they were attributed to another cause than the true one. Michael's death was involved in deep mystery; some ascribed it to suicide—a belief almost confirmed, by the circumstance that the weapon of destruction was his own; others suspected that he had been murdered by his lawless confederates; and their sudden abandonment

of the lonely house upon the moor, went far to strengthen that conclusion.

Why prolong the tale? I recovered slowly, and again found myself upon the world. I had known every alternation of human fortune. Nursed in penury, and reared in splendour—seduced, abandoned, protected, and beloved—now gifted with independence—a mother, and, in all save the name, a wife—then the follower of a camp, bereaved of child and lover, an outcast, a murderess, and a maniac!

* * * *

intelligence of my child. Alas! it was illusory, and fond expectation ended in the bitterest disappointment. My gipsy habits, and an utter contempt of danger—for life so valueless as mine costs not a thought about its preservation—enabled me to accompany a conquering army. I shared largely in the spoil of many a battle-field, and amassed much wealth. At last, weary of scenes of war, and all hope of recovering the lost one over, I returned to my native land, and rejoined the wandering people where you found me. My power over them is boundless; for gold, that controls all from the court to the cottage, influences the gipsy bivouac as powerfully as it does the camp of kings. Here, in the same rude tent, where the first cry of infancy was heard, my passing sigh shall escape. I was born free as the mountain deer—I will live the life of liberty—and when my mortal course “is well nigh done,” the tameless spirit shall part among the untamed, and but one command be given—to bear me hither, and lay me in my mother’s grave!”

The solemnity of the place and hour, the confession of a tale of blood, struck O'Connor, firm as he was, with a feeling of unusual depression. Both for some time were silent; but the Gipsy was the first to break it.

“ You march to-morrow ; and here we part.”

“ And that we ever meet in this world is more than doubtful.” Said the soldier, with a deep sigh.

“ *We shall meet,*” replied the Gipsy solemnly. “ Better we did not, for the meeting will be a melancholy one for both.”

“ Nonsense, Ellen ; you yield to delusive

“You foretell a brave and noble destiny.”

“I tell only what is decreed,” she returned. “I never saw a hand on which one peaceful line of happiness could not be traced but yours. Well, O'Connor, you have the Gipsy's blessing—we must separate.”

“Stay, Ellen; before you leave me, will you reply to some questions?”

“Ask! they shall be answered.”

“You seem to love one person as ardently as you detest another. I mean your regard for Mary Howard appears equalled by your hatred of her lover.”

“Why should I not love her tenderly? Breathes there a being that should have the same hold upon this withered heart as she? That sweet child, who lay for months upon my bosom, as though I had been her mother—she, whose rosy lips I kissed before I slept—she, whose infant prattle was the first sound I heard for many a month when waking—she—the child of him who succoured my dying parent, and who, when

deserted by all the world beside, sheltered and protected me. O'Connor, if a life could secure the happiness, and avert the misfortunes of Mary Howard, I would buy her weal with mine. But, alas! it is fated; the decree has gone forth, and destiny will be fulfilled."

"Nonsense, Ellen. I am no believer in blind predestination. Warn her of her danger, and you will avert it."

"No—she would not believe me—for she could not comprehend the extent of man's villany—and one honeyed word from that accom-

Listen—and then say whether the designs of such a scoundrel, are not more formidable than those of ordinary profligates. From the wild and wandering habits of our tribes things are known to us, that would almost appear, when unexplained, rather the work of divination, than simply resulting from the insight into human life, which an eternal change of place and an extended intercourse with the whole family of man afford to the gipsy tribe. Humble as our influence may seem, it reaches where it could not be supposed. To us, the palace is open as the cottage; and strange and wonderful are the mysteries concealed closely from the world, but every day revealed to us. Those whose rank and intellect would never permit them to stoop and parley with a wandering mendicant, pry anxiously into the decrees of fate; and men who proudly lock their secret thoughts and actions from their equals, open them unreservedly to a vagabond like me! This may appear incredible, but remember that human nature in all cases and

278 THE GIPSY'S STORY CONTINUED.

circumstances is the same : the life of the wisest is but a chapter of contradictions—and cunning and folly, weakness and determination, mix in and mar the deepest schemes which mortal foresight forms. Now hear a tale of villany—and, when you have heard it, judge wherefore I tremble for that artless girl.

It was late in the autumn of last year, and we had been sojourning in the neighbourhood of a garrison town. We were encamped upon a heath, and I was returning to our bivouac from a village in the vicinity of our halting-place, to

poor sufferer, and comforted her with an assurance of immediate succour. The vehicle came promptly—I removed her in it to my tent—laid her on my own bed—and, to be brief, in two hours she gave birth to a dead child.

I saw that she could not outlive her baby long—she was sinking fast—and all I could do was done. Our humble means and skill were exhausted to save her; but it was vain, for life was ebbing. The delicacy of the skin, the softness of the hand, the fine texture of her undergarments, required less than gipsy acuteness to ascertain that the poor sufferer had been cradled in the lap of luxury. Finding herself dying, she requested to be left with me alone; a wave of the hand cleared the tent, and I sat down beside her humble pallet.

She turned her fading eye on mine—once it had been a soft and lustrous hazel one.

“Thanks”—she said, “my last thanks! Oh, God! that my mother’s child should draw her last breath, disgraced, deserted, and even without

the comfort of a good man's prayer! Kind gipsy, listen to me—I cannot leave the world without telling you a tale of crime—you can bear evidence to its punishment. Oh! Have my dying request attended to. Let me and the fruit of my offending be laid in hallowed ground, and the child of sin and shame sleep in the same earth that covers its guilty mother.

“I am the daughter of a field-officer. I was born in India—my mother died, and I was sent to England an infant. There I remained for many years, carefully and expensively educated:

unknown to the other, admiration from the same source ; and, as it may be imagined, mutual ruin was the consequence.

“ My strength is sinking,” she said, “ and let me hurry over my guilty story.

“ We went next season to Harrowgate, and there met one whom, even in death, I will not name. May God pardon him as I do ! He was introduced to my unhappy father, brought to the house, and, with the unsuspecting confidence of a man who knew nothing of the world, permitted to domesticate himself in our family. He sought every opportunity to win my affections, and told an artful story, which lulled every fear to rest ; I believed—confided—was fascinated—and undone !

“ Months passed—shame and guilt are consequent on each other—and mine was not to be concealed. I urged that marriage so often and so solemnly promised, and day after day my request was evaded. At last, wearied by my importunities, or unable to dissemble longer, he

abruptly quitted the house. I wrote to him—
appealed to his better feelings, and stated the
desperation of my own. I conjured him, by every
holy oath and promise, to rescue me from the
shame he had wrought, and retrieve what before
had been an unsullied reputation. By a chain
of accidents the letter fell into my father's hands
the morning after his own wife had eloped with
my betrayer!

* * * * *

“What was the result? The abused old man
retired to his chamber, and, while reason was

you found me. A rush of horses caused me to look round—it was an officer and lady, followed by a servant. They passed me at speed. One glance—and it was fatal. It was my seducer—and his wretched victim—my father's wife!"

Her failing strength could hold out no longer. She fell heavily on my breast—I called for help, and had wine administered. Once or twice she essayed to speak—but the words were unintelligible—and with one long deep sigh—the parting struggle of a broken heart—she drooped her head forward and expired in my arms.

"Great God! can there be such villany on earth, and it remain unpunished?" exclaimed the soldier, as Ellen's melancholy narrative ended. "I had heard that before he joined us, Phillips had been engaged in an affair of gallantry, but the lady's levity was so great, that in a few months she left him for another."

"Ay," replied the Gipsy; "that was the worthless wife. Shame closed the lips of the poor sufferer, and she carried her secret to the

grave, while her abandoned stepmother gloried in an open exhibition of her infamy. Thus a part only of the villany of Phillips was known, and that infinitely the more pardonable of his proceedings. It is time to separate; and we must part."

"I am deeply grieved," said the soldier, "to think that poor Mary should be exposed to the artifices of that accomplished scoundrel. Had I remained in England my threatened vengeance might have restrained him. All that can be hoped is from her high principles, and his das-

“Farewell,” she muttered—and O’Connor felt her tears upon his cheek. “It is the parting kiss of friendship; and thine are the last lips that shall ever press the Gipsy’s!—Farewell.”

The words were scarcely spoken until she glided from his side. He saw her dark form vanish beneath the shadow of the tower—her footsteps died away in the silence of the night, and the soldier felt himself now the only living thing among the mansions of the dead.

“Strange and eventful is that woman’s history”—he murmured. “A heart in which daring and tenderness unite—a mind in which madness and intelligence are so blended.” He mused for a few minutes on his own wayward fortunes, and then, with a deep sigh left, as he imagined, the village churchyard for ever.

When he reached the inn he found that all but his own servant had retired to bed, and he delivered a letter to his master. It was an official note from Phillips, stating that he had been unexpectedly called away, and begging that the

Major would excuse him from marching with the detachment. His absence was a relief to his rival; and O'Connor was thus saved the annoyance of holding any further intercourse with a man whom he so thoroughly hated and despised.

DEPARTURE FROM COUNTRY QUARTERS—A PARTING INTERVIEW.

KING HENRY. On, on, ye noble English—
For there is none of you so mean and base,
That hath not noble lustre in your eyes.
I see you stand like greyhounds in the slip,
Straining upon the start—the game's afoot :
Follow your spirit.

KING HENRY V.

PISTOL. Touch her soft mouth and march.

Ibid.



CHAPTER XI.

DEPARTURE FROM COUNTRY QUARTERS—
A PARTING INTERVIEW.

THE morning sun had scarcely broken on an unclouded sky when the bugle sounded, and the village street showed signs of military preparation. The baggage was already gone, and the men, in full marching order, were falling in before the Greyhound. Being the *élite* companies of a light infantry regiment, their dress and appearance were smart and soldierly. All were in the prime of life, or entering on the world, with the ardour of "hope-fed youth;" while the prospect of a bustling campaign added to the excitement attendant on a change of quarters.

Yet looking down the line, here and there a face might be discovered, on which symptoms of depression could be traced. Rustic *liaisons* had been interrupted by a summons to the field—the raw soldier fancied he was leaving Ashfield with a broken heart—while streaming eyes from many a cottage-window, told that he had not urged his suit in vain. For these sentimental sufferings, alas! there was no sympathy. At the sorrows of his young companion the older soldier laughed, as he favoured him with a long list of sundry demoiselles whom in his time he had

bugles played a quick step, and Ashfield was left.

As the gay detachment passed through the street, hands were kissed and handkerchiefs waved their mute adieus. Of all the village belles, the prettiest and the tenderest of the sufferers was the fair milliner. Unconsciously O'Connor had achieved a conquest there. His graceful farewell was afterwards long remembered, and for many a month Miss Burnett never named "the brave and gentle Irishman," but an involuntary sigh betrayed the deep impression the manly and unpretending soldier had left behind.

Alas! while he kissed his hand to her, he was only thinking of another. The line of march was directly before the windows of the parsonage; and as he approached the dwelling of his lost love, he felt a sinking of the heart as if he was bidding happiness an eternal farewell. Fearing that any eye should remark his visible agitation, he ordered the music which had ceased, to play again. Phillips, whose taste was excellent, had

occasionally directed the bugle practice, and had chosen pieces for their performance. Among others he had arranged Mary Howard's song; and, as if it were to more pointedly recal the late scene of O'Connor's rejection, it was that tune that the bugle-master selected.

Mr. Howard was standing at the entrance of his avenue, and as the detachment passed him, he took leave of his friends individually. O'Connor pulled up his horse and dismounted; while the old man, under considerable emotion, bade him a kind farewell.

by a singular accident crossed the line of march, and formed a strange and melancholy contrast to the gay procession it encountered.

“That is, indeed, a striking picture,” he continued. “How emblematic of human life! in which brightness and gloom are so intimately blended! Your procession, full of high hope and entering on its brilliant and exciting career, and you dark train winding to the close of every mortal course—the same goal at which the race of all, the fortunate and the miserable, must terminate—the grave—the grave! God bless you, my friend. If an old man’s prayers can win prosperity, you have my warmest ones for your happiness.—Farewell. It is unlikely that in this world we shall ever meet again. May we meet in a better one!”

A tear stole down his cheek as he pressed the soldier’s hand, and left him to join the funeral train.

To meet Mary Howard again was what O’Connor neither expected nor desired. It was

however unavoidable. A servant took his horse, and he hurried along the avenue as if anxious to get a painful interview as quickly ended as he could. In the same room in which his suit had been rejected, he found her whom he had loved and lost.

Mary Howard was in tears; and the soldier was deeply affected as he sate down beside her. She was the first to speak.

“And you would have left us, Major O’Connor, without bidding me farewell. Alas! have I so soon forfeited your friendship?”

“Oh, my Miss Howard, that would be in

“It is only for Mary Howard to name her wishes, and for me to see them gratified.”

You are leaving England,” she continued, in a broken voice; “and God knows how many chances are against our ever meeting. That my feelings for your future happiness are deep and lasting, my own heart can best tell. Is there any impropriety in confessing that regard which a sister may bestow? Such is mine for you, O’Connor. I am affianced to another; my hand is plighted to him—*him* I shall love as a wife loves—*you* as an only brother.”

She burst into tears; and the soldier was deeply agitated.

“The request I would make, is that you will send me your picture. When far away I will think of you and pray for you.”

The soldier pressed her to his heart. Oh! Mary, had we met sooner or never, I should have been spared an aching heart. Your wishes shall be obeyed.”

“I thank you. Here is a little token of

affection. When you look at it, sometimes remember her that gave it."

It was a locket, containing a well-executed miniature and a ringlet of her beautiful hair. The soldier placed it in his bosom, and for some time both continued silent. At last O'Connor rose—

"It is painful, Mary, to say farewell; but the word must be spoken."

"Farewell, my friend—my brother!" and, yielding to feelings that could not be controlled, she laid her head upon his shoulder, and wept

a heart as ever beat for woman had been offered and refused; and, fascinated by the artful homage of a traitor, the cup of happiness had been within her grasp—and in a luckless hour she rejected it!





THE MARCH FROM ASHFIELD.

HERMIONE. Pray you, sit by us,
And tell's a tale.

MAMILIUS. Merry or sad shall 't be ?

HERMIONE. As merry as you will.

WINTER'S TALE.



THE BIVOUAC;

OR

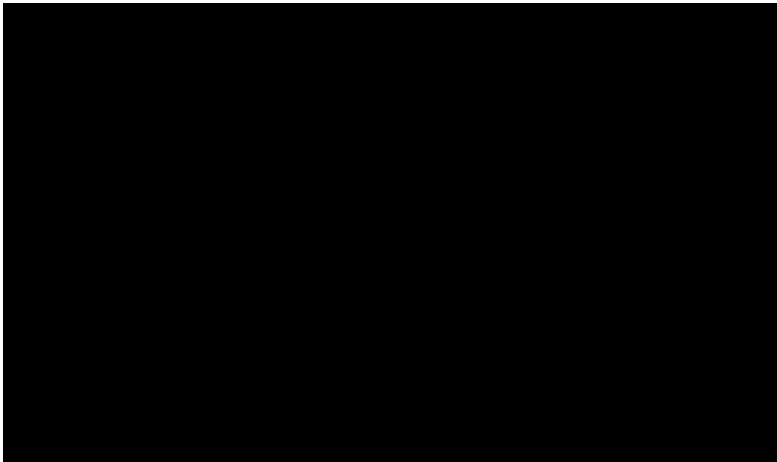
STORIES OF THE PENINSULAR WAR.



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THE
B I V O U A C ;
OR
STORIES OF
THE PENINSULAR WAR.

BY W. H. MAXWELL,

AUTHOR OF

“STORIES OF WATERLOO,” “WILD SPORTS OF THE WEST,” &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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1837.



WHITING, BEAUFORT HOUSE, STRAND.



CONTENTS

OF

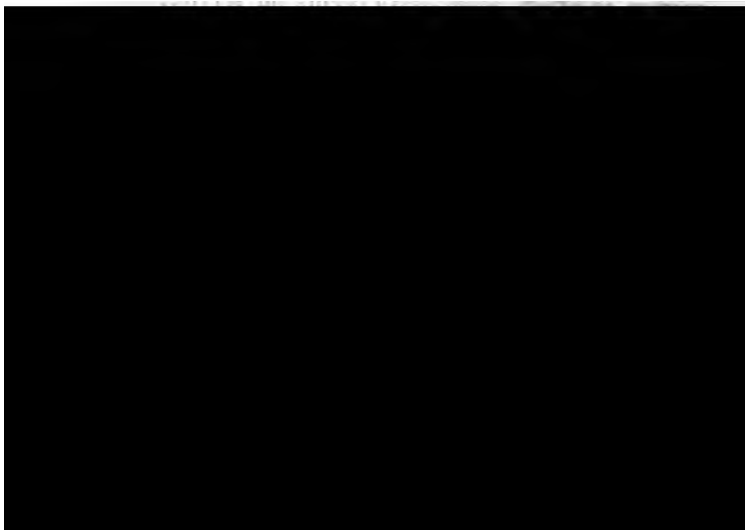
THE SECOND VOLUME.

	PAGE
THE CARD-CASE	1
THE RIVAL ARMIES	43
OPENING OF THE CAMPAIGN—AFFAIR OF ST. MILLAN—THE BIVOUAC	55
VITTORIA	73
MOUNTAIN COMBAT—FRENCH BIVOUAC—MILITARY REMI- NISCENCES	91
CONFESSIONS OF A GENTLEMAN WHO WOULD HAVE MARRIED IF HE COULD. (FIRST CONFESSION.)	111
NIGHT IN THE PYRENEES—THE MURDERED SENTINEL—AND THE GUERRILLA CHIEF	157
THE GUERRILLA BIVOUAC	177
A GUERRILLA BREAKFAST	197
CONFESSIONS OF A GUERRILLA	209
THE FALL OF ST. SEBASTIAN	241
THE STORM OF BADAJOZ	253
THE DEAD LIEUTENANT	289

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- 10 -
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THE BIVOUC.

THE CARD-CASE.

BARDOLPH. Sir John, you are so fretful, you cannot live long.

KING HENRY IV.

HOTSPUR. Tell me, tell me,
How show'd his tasking? Seem'd it in contempt?

VERNON. No, by my soul; I never in my life,
Did hear a challenge urged more modestly.

Ibid.

CAIUS. Vat be you all, one, two, tree, four, come for?

HOST. To see thee fight.

* * * * *

PAGE. Master Shallow, you have yourself been a great fighter.

MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR.



1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that this is crucial for ensuring the integrity of the financial data and for facilitating audits. The text notes that without proper record-keeping, it would be difficult to identify discrepancies or errors in the accounts.

2. The second part of the document outlines the various methods used to collect and analyze financial data. It describes how data is gathered from different sources, such as sales receipts, invoices, and bank statements, and how this information is then processed and analyzed to identify trends and patterns. The text also mentions the use of specialized software tools to assist in these tasks.

3. The third part of the document focuses on the role of management in overseeing the financial operations. It discusses how management is responsible for setting financial goals, monitoring performance, and making strategic decisions based on the available data. The text highlights the importance of regular communication and reporting between management and the accounting department.

4. The fourth part of the document addresses the challenges faced by organizations in managing their finances. It identifies common issues such as budget overruns, cash flow problems, and inefficient resource allocation. The text provides suggestions for how these challenges can be addressed through better planning, control, and communication.

5. The fifth and final part of the document concludes by summarizing the key points discussed and emphasizing the overall importance of sound financial management for the success of any organization. It reiterates that maintaining accurate records, using effective data analysis methods, and having strong management oversight are all essential components of a successful financial strategy.



THE BIVOUC.

CHAPTER I.

THE CARD-CASE.

IT was soon after the affair of New Ross that I obtained leave of absence from the general of the district, and repaired to the metropolis. I had been wounded by a rebel from a window with a slug; and though it traversed the bone without causing any injury, yet from the eccentric direction it had taken, an experienced practitioner was required to discover and extract it.

Two or three days after the operation had been successfully performed, I found myself able to move about, and set out to visit some of my acquaintances, who happened to be sojourning to

the capital. Among others there was a kinsman of my mother, named Roderick O'Dogherty. He resided constantly in town, occupying a small house in Kildare-street, and thither I directed my course.

Roderick was the youngest son of my grand-uncle. He had him educated for a priest, but Roderick preferred the trade of arms. Early in life he entered the Austrian service, and through many ups and downs of fortune, raised himself to the rank of Major-general, with the reputation of being a stout soldier. An unexpected succession

many of the ills of life, had certainly wrought no change for the better in either the health or temper of my mother's kinsman, the worthy commander.

Whether his claims rested upon reputation in arms or on acquired wealth, no man exacted more attention from his relations to the third and fourth generation, than Roderick O'Dogherty. The most constant and punctilious inquiries after his health were indispensable, and the slightest omission was booked in the tablets of his memory against the unhappy offender. To visit him, Heaven knows, was any thing but an agreeable duty. If he happened to be gouty or rheumatic, one was doomed to listen patiently to a narrative of his sufferings, and the deepest sympathy expected in return for this condescension on his part, in favouring you with a detail of his afflictions. If there was any abatement of his numerous maladies, the unhappy visiter was martyred with interminable anecdotes of the seven years' war, and the exploits of a Baron Puffenberg, to whom half a

century before the gallant general had been aide-de-camp.

Of all Roderick's kindred, I, probably, was the least assiduous in my attentions. Most of them were more closely related than myself, and therefore, I was not likely to figure in his last will and testament. In his best humour the commander was a bore, and in his ill-temper a firebrand. I was not obliged, I thought, to listen to long stories, or submit to his irritability, especially as it was more than doubtful that after he had been gathered to his fathers, I should

me. One of honest Philip's intelligent looks told me "to prepare for squalls." "The ould gentleman had the divil's night of it!" he whispered as I mounted the stairs. "There was no standing him this morning, good or bad. He was as short in the temper as cat's hair, and would fret a saint, let alone a sinner like me." With this pleasant intimation, and the prospect of an agreeable *tête-à-tête*, I was conducted to the presence.

I found the commander ensconced in an easy chair with his infirm foot resting on a hassock, and a thick-winded pug reposing before the sounder member. I looked at my distinguished relative, and a crosser-looking elderly gentleman a dog never barked at! If, as it was said, the Irish adventurers so frequently found in the ranks of continental princes, were as dangerous to the fair as formidable to their enemies, I am persuaded that Roderick was a virtuous exception. He was now a little pousy man, fat enough for a friar, with thin legs and small gray eyes, ready

to fire up at the slightest provocation. His nose was short and up-turned, and had never been an organ that a statuary would have selected for a cast. Yet, stunted as it was, a Hulan, it appeared, had fancied it for sabre practice, and by a bisecting scar rendered it the more remarkable. The commander was wrapped in a flannel dressing-gown, and wore a purple velvet nightcap. His hair, white as snow, was combed back into a queue, and secured with an ample bow of black ribbon. As a sort of moral for a soldier's use, there was no weapon visible in the apartment;

Pish! Nowadays men make a work about nothing. I remember Count Schroeder got a musket-bullet in the hip, at Breda, and he had it out and was on horseback again the second morning. Soldiers were soldiers then! What the devil were you about at Ross? You managed matters prettily."

"I think we did," I replied stoutly.

"Pish! Why did you let the rebels into the town?"

"Why—because we could not keep them out."

"Pshaw!" he growled testily. "I tell you how poor dear Puffenberg and I would have managed matters. We would have laned them with artillery—guns double loaded with grape and canister at point-blank distance—charged while the head of the column was broken, and supported the cavalry with—"

"We had no artillery but a few battalion pieces and a couple of old ship-guns."

"Humph!" growled the commander. "Why not try cavalry?"

“ Cavalry could not act. The masses were dense, the street filled with pikemen, and the windows crowded with musketeers. What impression could cavalry make against rebels in close column with pikes sixteen feet long ? ”

“ Humph ! ”

“ It was the gallantest affair during the rebellion, and old Johnson fought it nobly. ”

“ Humph ! Well, you dine here to-day at five ? You’ll meet your cousin Hector. ”

“ I am unfortunately engaged. ”

“ Humph ! Always engaged. No matter. ”

I left him, glad of escaping more of the reminiscences of Baron Puffenberg; and as I was being let out, found Hector the hope of the O'Dogherties knocking at the door. He turned with me down the street, and at once commenced a detail of his sufferings, and a diatribe touching his uncle's parsimony. No one was worse calculated to dance attendance on a peevish invalid than Roderick's heir-apparent. He was a wild, headstrong, mercurial character—a union of opposite qualities—a mixture of good and evil, and unhappily for himself, the latter predominated.

Hector was scarcely twenty, and one of the handsomest lads I ever saw. His education was imperfect and his principles lax. Had he been carefully brought up, and the bad portions of his disposition eradicated while a boy, he might have made a valuable man. But he had been spoiled by a weak mother—his vices had been permitted to run riot—and at the early age of twenty, Hector was a gambler and a duellist.

His means—those of the son of an embarrassed gentleman—were not flourishing ; but his credit, based upon the expectancy of succeeding to the property of his uncle the general, kept him afloat. Nevertheless, a desperate love of play placed him in eternal difficulties, and his pugnacious spirit was under a constant excitement. His end was what might be easily anticipated. He quarrelled at a billiard-table with a gambler as fiery and wayward as himself, and, as we say in Connaught, was left next morning “quivering on a daisy.”

every quarter's check accompanied by a groan that would lead a stranger to suppose the old curmudgeon was in convulsions and a torrent of abuse that a pickpocket would not stand, I must visit him twice a day, dine with him on mutton chops, dawdle four hours over a rascally pint of sherry, and listen to his d—d yarns about Puffenberg and Schroeder, and the siege of Breda. Does he suspect that I shake the elbow?"

"Of that, Hector, I'll tell you more after breakfast to-morrow. I am going to him by special appointment, to hear a full detail of your delinquencies."

"Do you dine with the old tiger to-day?"

"I should be devilish sorry to interrupt your *tête-à-tête*. I told him I was engaged."

"Ah!—if I dare refuse! But one whisper that I handled a cue or threw a main, and my ruin was complete. I am forced to humour the old salamander, though it breaks my heart. Well, you will meet me at Darcy's? We'll have a grilled bone, and some sober conversation."

I declined; but Hector was so urgent, that at last I reluctantly consented. The truth was, he had already embroiled me in a quarrel, and introduced me, on one occasion, to a gaming-house where I had been pretty smartly plucked.

The lieutenant burst into a loud laugh—
“Well said—Pat. Hang it, we never gave you the credit you deserve for high morality, and anti-duelling principles into the bargain.”

O'Brien coloured, and replied, “Many, Lorimer, have been misunderstood; and such has been my case. Circumstances involved me in

The first is bad enough; but he is innocent when compared with the second. True, he may involve you in a quarrel, but chance may extricate you uninjured, or you may escape with a broken bone—but from the other there is no deliverance. Titled or untitled it is all the same. He who will not spare wife, children, kindred, friends—will he show mercy to an acquaintance? Trust me, no honour binds him. The gambler, when he has you in his hand, will fleece you to the last guinea. Hope nothing from his name—nothing from his character. Though his lineage be old as the Conqueror—though his name be one that fortune enrols as foremost in her list—‘the man’s a man for a’ that.’ He plays, and is obnoxious to plunder himself; and if he can do it he plunders in return. The duellist is bad enough, but—”

“Why, d—n it, Pat, you have fought four times yourself!”

“I have, and I regret it. One unfortunate affair, I lament to add, has left this hand bloody.

I have been twice as often in the field as second; and, thank God, no friend whom I accompanied fell. I have, unluckily, when honourable mediation was rejected or impracticable, been necessitated to resort to the last and worst alternative the code of honour sanctions; but, believe 'me, boys, he who is from necessity party to a duel, will never experience more pleasure than when he brings two brave men from the ground, uninjured in person and reputation."

"This is a new doctrine of O'Brien's," said a young subaltern. "And we are not to fight, it

be his first care. The man whose courage is established is very seldom called upon; and the man who will fight will rarely volunteer a quarrel. Hence, the brave pass through life generally offending others and unmolested themselves."

"How came it then, Pat, that with those feelings you have been so particularly unfortunate?"

"Simply because I joined a regiment that was miserably divided among themselves. County politics were its cause—patronage was shamefully abused—men of obscure birth and disreputable character obtained commissions; and in the militia there were persons who should have worn no epaulet, except a footman's. But why waste good counsel upon idle boys? all is lost upon them; and though speaking for the last five minutes like an oracle, I might just as well have been whistling jigs to a milestone. But to resume my story. Fortunately for myself I was an hour too late in keeping my engagement with my cousin; and when I reached Earl-street, found

Darcy's whole establishment in desperate commotion. There were in every direction the eye turned to incontestable symptoms of a general row; and the mortal remains of plates, dishes, and decanters, were strewn about the room, thick as leaves in Vallombrosa. From a waiter, who had been complimented with a black eye, I learned some particulars of the battle. Hector had been there, and ordered supper; sat down in expectation of my arrival, and managed to kill time while waiting for me by quarrelling with a military party in the opposite box. Two or three

directed my steps to the watchhouse to visit my afflicted kinsman.

I reached the place, and thinking it prudent to reconnoitre before I made my *entrée*, I peeped slyly over the hatch. There was Hector, with sundry other malefactors, in "durance vile." By a stranger my cousin might have been readily mistaken for the commander of the garrison, he appeared so perfectly at home, and exercised such absolute authority. The constable of the night and Roderick's heir presumptive were seated in close conclave in a corner, and from their position being contiguous to the door, I could overhear the whole colloquy. Dogberry was remonstrating.

"Arrah, Hecthur astore.* Arrah, now it's too bad—the third night this week. Have ye no conscience, man, in tattering that unfortunate tailor out of bed. Upon my sowl, he has a cough that would scar ye. He's a wakely divil; and as his wife said the last night, if ye'll drag

* *Angèle*, Hector darling.

him out of his warm bed, ye'll have his life to answer for."

"Pshaw!" ejaculated the prisoner. "He charges for all in the account. I never knock him up for bail but he lays it thick upon the next order. Send for him, Brady; get in as much porter and whiskey as will make all drunk, and we'll sit down comfortably at the fire." •

"Make way for Mistur O'Dogherty," roared divers of the body-guard. "Get up, you in the corner there. Arrah! get out of the way; the gentleman's a regular customer, and we don't see

it no hour for salutations and quickly retreated to "mine inn," leaving the task of Hector's deliverance to the worthy artist, who, as it would appear, was my cousin's "standing bail."

Next day I repaired to Kildare-street in due time; and it was lucky that I was so regular, for Phil made a most alarming report. Overnight the gout had seized upon Roderick's better member; he was in considerable pain, and as Clancy said, "the priest himself darn't go near him." 'T'o add to the misfortune, several gentlemen had called early in the morning, stated their business to be urgent, and could scarcely be restrained by the valet from invading the sacred precincts of the commander's bedroom. Thus Roderick had been disturbed before his time, was consequently in most abominable temper, and I, alas! should in all likelihood be obliged to bear the first burst of gout and irritability.

I found him in company with his pug—*par nobile*—Ireland could not match them. Roderick was ready for battle; and though it was not five

minutes past eleven, he rated me for the delay. Breakfast passed, and the General commenced :

“ I had an infernal night of it—gout in the knee first; then moved to the ankle; lame in both legs; no sleep; could have dozed a little in the morning, when three scoundrels, with knocks that I thought would have demolished the door, disturbed me. Well they did not break into my bedroom! Private business forsooth. I’m pestered with fellows of their kind; force their way up under false pretences, all for one purpose—begging—begging. I have found Aladdin’s

“Humph!” he growled. “All words—mere words of course. But, regarding Hector—I hear he is dissipated—drinks—brawls—plays. I want you to ascertain the truth, and give me quiet and confidential information of his general proceedings.”

I fired at the proposition, and losing all dread of the commander boldly renounced the commission.

“Why, sir, what the devil do you take me for? I turn spy upon my kinsman! By heaven! if a stranger proposed such an employment, he should dearly repent that he offered such an indignity.”

The commander felt the rebuke, and began muttering what he intended as a qualification.

“No, Pat—no. D—n it, I did not mean that you should be a spy; but—but—”

“But, sir, yours was a proposition which no gentleman could listen to; and I wish you a good morning.”

“Stop, I say—stop!” The hall-bell rang

violently. "Confound it! the hotness of young men's tempers is nowadays intolerable. This is I suppose one of these damned visiters; but if I don't despatch him in double quick, my name's not Roderick!"

The commander was right in his supposition. Clancy announced the stranger as one of the sleep-breakers; handed in a card, on which was engraved, "Mr. Alleyn, 40th Regiment;" and next moment the gentleman was ushered in.

He was quite a lad, and also a very young soldier; for whether it was the importance of his

are Mr. Alleyn?" and the surly commander examined the young man's card.

"Yes, sir, my name is Alleyn; and, sir—hem—it has given me pain, to be obliged—hem—to call on you—for—"

"Sir—I understand you—I am a plain man, and hate long speeches. In a word, sir, you might have spared your call; it will procure you nothing from me."

"This is very strange, sir—your character—"

"Pish! sir. I don't care a fig what any man says—and to cut short the interview, you may be off and try some other fool."

"Sir—this is unaccountable! I am not experienced in such matters, and confess I am rather embarrassed—"

"No doubt, sir, a common consequence of imprudence. I am busy, sir, and you intrude."

The young man reddened to the ears.

"Sir, this won't do. If you think to bully, you are mistaken. I insist on an immediate explanation."

“ Why, sounds ! Do you threaten me in my own house ? I suppose you intend committing a burglary. Here, Clancy, show him the door.”

“ You shall hear me, sir ! I have claims upon you that must be satisfied before I leave this.”

“ Why, you audacious scoundrel ! Go for a peace officer, Clancy. I’ll have you settled.”

“ Ah ! I understand you ; and it is time to leave you, sir, when you resort to the police. But let me say, that your conduct is ungentlemanly, and your meanness disgraceful to the

“ I wish I knew where the scoundrel could be found, I would indict him. I would, by every thing litigious, for attempting to obtain money by intimidation. Hish!—my toe—my toe! The villain—to fancy that I was to be bullied. Hish!—Hish! Another fit brought on.”

He continued grumbling and groaning for a quarter of an hour, until the malady abated, and his violent excitement had exhausted itself. Once more I rose to take my departure, when another thundering summons was heard at the hall-door—another card introduced—and immediately after, “ Captain Coolaghan of the South Cork” was ushered into the presence of the ex-general. He too, as Phil Clancy mentioned in a whisper, was one of the sleep-breakers.

If the former visiter had evinced some diffidence in the opening of the interview, there was no indication of any tendency to blushing on the part of Captain Coolaghan of the South Cork. I examined his figure hastily—for it was rather remarkable. In age he was above fifty ; in height, I should say, approaching to seven feet. His

shoulders were broad—his legs thin—while his whole appearance had what the Irish call “a shuck look,” and told plainly that the visiter had never considered abstinence and water-drinking necessary for his soul’s weal. No man could be better satisfied with himself, or deemed his place in society less equivocal. He entered Roderick’s “great chamber” with a smile, nodded graciously to us both, established himself in a chair, produced a silver snuffbox of immense capacity, took a deep pinch, and then protruding his long chin sundry inches beyond his black

proud of the pleasure of making your acquaintance. Your friend, I presume?" and he bowed graciously to me.

"Yes, sir; and here with me on particular business."

"I comprehend—all right;" and Captain Coolaghan closed his left eye knowingly. "We may proceed to business then at once; and faith, when a man kicks up a dust and gets into scrapes, why the sooner the thing's settled the better."

"Kicks up a dust—gets into scrapes! Why, sir, what the devil do you mean?" exclaimed the friend of Puffenberg, as he looked daggers at his new acquaintance of the South Cork.

"Why then, indeed, general, your treatment of my young friend of the 40th, was not the civilest in the world. But come, come—when men grow ould they always get cranky. We ought to make allowances. God knows, neither you nor I, when we come to his years, will be able to kick up such a rookawn;"* and he smiled

* *Anglice*, scene of confusion.

and nodded at me; while Roderick, who was making himself up for mischief, impatiently exclaimed in a voice almost smothered by passion—

“Who the devil are you? What do you mean? What do you want?”

“Faith, and I can answer you all. My name, Charles Coolaghan, of the South Cork—my maning, that you insulted my friend; and my business, a written apology. But come, we won't be too hard—We'll try and plaister it up without burning powder. Say ye were drunk. Do what my young friend asks, and there will

regret is, that I did not knock out the scoundrel's brains; and if your business is in any way connected with him, I beg, sir, you'll oblige me with your absence."

"Well, upon my conscience," returned he of the South Cork, "a more unchristian kind of an ould gintleman I never talked to! You—with one foot in the grave—arrah, for the sake of your poor sowl, you ought to make atonement. Come, give us what we want—write the apology—say you were drunk—and—"

"Why you infernal scoundrel!" Up jumped the captain—up rose the general—I flung myself between them. Coolaghan had seized his cane—Roderick grasped his crutch—while Phil Clancy, hearing the fresh uproar, rushed into the room, and was directed by his master to exclude the visiter, and that too, if necessary, *vi et armis*. The captain slowly retired, notifying his wrath as he departed.

"Ye ould firebrand—sure gout and age should have taken the divil out of ye before this. Killing waiters—murdering a whole company—and

when gintlemen sind for satisfaction, nothing but the grossest abuse ! But I'll have ye out. Troth I'll parade ye on the fifteen acres ; ay, if you come hopping there upon that wooden prop ;—or if ye don't, I'll post ye over Ireland—ye cantankerous—ould—desperate—”

The rest was lost in his descent of the staircase ; but the terrific slam of the hall-door told plainly enough, that Captain Coolaghan of the South Cork had “ exited ” in a rage.

“ Pat,” said the commander, as he endeavoured to recover breath, “ bring me my

of the unfortunate commander. Up ran Phil Clancy pale as a ghost.

“Another of them divils, that was here this morning,” quoth the valet.

“Let him up”—replied the general, while his brows contracted, and his look bespoke desperate determination. “Let him up. If I miss him with the crutch, do you, Pat, knock him down with the poker.” And Puffenberg’s confederate prepared for action, and I to witness the termination of a scene, that at present was strange and inexplicable.

The door opened—a very fashionable-looking dragoon presented himself—inquired “if General O’Dogherty was at home?” and on being answered in the affirmative, begged to have “Captain Hay of the Fifteenth” announced as having called. Roderick, with more politeness than I expected, after his recent visitations, struck with the superior manner and address of the new comer, requested him to take a chair, and then intimated that the general was present. The dragoon

looked rather sceptically at the commander, and then turned his eyes on me.

“ Really, gentlemen,” he said, “ I feel myself a little puzzled. You, sir,” as he addressed me, “ seem far too young to have attained that honourable standing in the army. And you, sir,” and he turned to Roderick, “ much too infirm for the extraordinary exertions which last night’s affair at Darcy’s must have required ’

The commander stared—while a faint and glimmering notion of the business flashed across my mind. Of course I kept my suspicions to

“Supped at the devil!” exclaimed the admirer of Baron Puffenberg. “Sir, I beg your pardon. Excuse my being irritable. Bad gout, sir. Saints would swear under half the provocation I have endured since daybreak. You’ll forgive me?”

The captain smiled and bowed.

“My dear sir,” continued Roderick, “I have not been out of my house these three months.”

“Then,” said the dragoon, “my conjectures are correct; and it is impossible that you could be the gentleman who knocked down Captain Edwards, blackened Mr. Heywood’s eye, and broke the waiter’s arm with a chair.”

My worthy kinsman repeated the charges categorically in a tone of voice so ludicrous, that neither Captain Hay nor I could refrain from laughing; and then added,

“Really, sir, I am astonished, and at a loss to know why such inquiry should be made of me.”

“The simplest reply, sir,” returned the dra-

goon, "will be given in the Hibernian style, by asking another question. Pray, sir, is this card yours?" and he handed one to the friend of Puffenberg.

The general rubbed the glasses of his spectacles, and examined the ticket attentively; and then with a look of unqualified surprise replied,

"It is mine—mine beyond a question!"

"Some one then has used your name and address with great freedom," observed Captain Hay.

"That person, if my suspicions be correct,

The unlucky youth, struck with the similarity between his uncle's and his own, had been examining the cases, put the wrong one in his pocket, and in the confusion of the preceding evening, had flung those of Baron Puffenberg's contemporary to his antagonists, and never discovered the mistake until the blunder had cost him an inheritance.

As to the quarrel at Darcy's—as well as I can now remember the wind up—it terminated in Capt. Coolaghan losing a finger and Hector a new hat—while one of the Connaught gentlemen, who had so handsomely volunteered his services on that fatal evening, was duly cased in lead and transmitted to the abbey of Burashool, there to repose in peace with a long and distinguished ancestry.

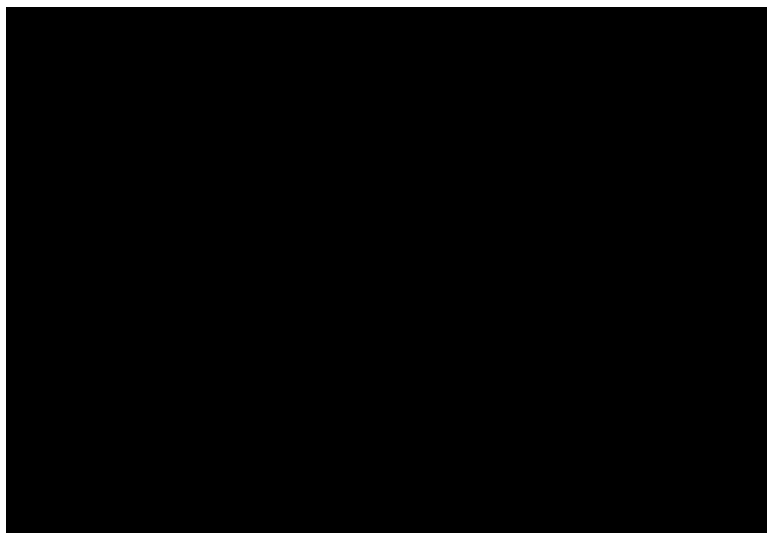
While these important events were being transacted, Roderick was no idler. For a fortnight he was denied to his acquaintances, and as Phil Clancy whispered, “was writing continually ;” for, as it subsequently appeared, he was engaged in

altering his will, and cutting off his unlucky nephew with a shilling, which he had the barbarity to have regularly tendered to him by his attorney. But the poor lad did not live to feel the effects of an uncle's wrath, produced by his own imprudence. He quarrelled at a hazard-table with a ruffian; he and his antagonist were men of a similar stamp—both were blacklegs, and both bullies—they adjourned of course to the field—and Hector fell.

I have only to add, that the friend and admirer of Baron Puffenberg, even after death, contrived

was the only legacy paid. For so confused and contradictory were the remainder, and so ingeniously did one provision nullify the next one, that of course the property was thrown into chancery, and there it continues to this day.

If Roderick's deliverance from purgatory depended on the payment of the mass fund, all I can say is, that there he lies, snug and warm!"





THE RIVAL ARMIES.

By heaven! it is a splendid sight to see,
For one who hath no friend, no brother there,
Their rival scarfs of mixed embroidery,
Their various arms that glitter in the air!

* * * * *

Three hosts combine to offer sacrifice ;
Three tongues prefer strange orisons on high ;
Three gaudy standards flout the pale blue skies ;
The shouts are—France, Spain, Albion, Victory!

CHILDE HAROLD.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

CHAPTER II.

THE RIVAL ARMIES.

A MONTH had passed away, and O'Connor was in another land. The embarkation at Portsmouth of a large reinforcement for the several battalions of his regiment, cantoned on the banks of the Douro, was promptly effected. The wind was favourable ; and as it blew half a gale from the time they cleared the Channel, the transports anchored in the Tagus on the sixth evening from that on which they had lost sight of the chalk-cliffs of Britain.

A new scene had opened on O'Connor. The bustle of an approaching campaign occupied his

thoughts ; and, in martial preparation, he strove to forget the disappointment his rejection by Mary Howard had occasioned.

Nothing could equal the enthusiastic ardour with which the British soldiery looked forward to the recommencement of active operations ; nothing could surpass their high discipline ; and the organization of the army was complete. During the period they had remained in winter cantonments, every arm of the force had been perfected, and the *matériel* of the English army was magnificent. Powerful reinforcements, including the

which, since the days of Marlborough, a British general had opened a campaign.

Never did a commander take the field under more glorious auspices. Supported by numerous bodies of native troops, and assisted by the most daring of the guerilla leaders, Wellington broke up from his cantonments with summer before him, and a rich and luxurious country through which to direct his line of march. His troops were flushed with victory—his opponents depressed from constant discomfiture. The opening movements indicated this feeling strongly. The French were already retrograding; the British preparing to advance. No wonder then the brilliant hopes of that splendid army were fully realized; and the glorious career of English conquest almost continued without a check, until the fields of France saw its banners float in victory; and the last struggles at Ortes and Toulouse attest the invincibility of Wellington!

While the British were preparing to march, the army of the centre, under Joseph Bonaparte,

followed by those of "the South," and "Portugal," retired slowly on the Ebro. As they were not pressed by the British light troops, the French corps moved leisurely along their rout, accompanied by an immense train of equipages and baggage. The appearance of the whole army was picturesque and imposing, from the gaiety of its equipment and the variety of its costume. Excepting the infantry of the line and the light battalions, few of the French regiments were similarly dressed. The horse artillery wore uniforms of light blue, braided with black lace; the

The regiments of the line had each their grenadier and voltigeur company; and even the light corps were provided with a company of the former. The appearance of the whole force was soldierly and effective—the cavalry was indeed superb—the artillery excellent, their caissons, guns, and harness in excellent order, and the horses in the highest condition.

Though the rival armies were in discipline and efficiency to all appearance perfect, a practised soldier would remark a striking dissimilarity in the *matériel* of their respective equipment. Every thing attached to the British was simple, compact, and limited as far as its being serviceable would admit; while the French corps was encumbered in its march with useless equipages, and burdened with accumulated plunder. That portion of the Spanish noblesse which had acknowledged the usurper now accompanied his retreat—state functionaries in court dresses and embroidery mingled with the troops—calashes with wives and mistresses moved between brigades of guns—

while nuns from Castile, and ladies from Andalusia, mounted on horseback and attired *en militaire*, deserted convent and castle, to follow the fortunes of some "bold dragoon." Never was an army, save that of Moscow, so overloaded with spoil and baggage, as that of Joseph Bonaparte with which he retired upon Vittoria.

Though the circumstance had neither escaped the observation or animadversion of its officers, the retreating columns as yet had experienced but little difficulty in transporting the unwieldy ambulances which contained more spoil than

many a prisoner was tauntingly asked by his French escort, "was Lord Wellington asleep?"

Nothing, indeed, could equal the astonishment of the usurper, when informed on the evening of the 18th, that the allies were in considerable force on the left bank of the Ebro! All the French arrangements were overthrown, and an instant night-march was rendered unavoidable. The drums beat to arms—the baggage was hastily put in motion—and the whole army which had been collected in Pancorbo, or bivouacked in its immediate vicinity, defiled towards the city of Vittoria.

The point on which the corps of Joseph Bonaparte had concentrated, is situated on the great road leading from Burgos to Bayonne. It is defended by a strong fort placed on a commanding eminence, which the French occupied with a regiment. A narrow valley, surrounded by rocky heights and crossed by a mountain torrent, affords barely space for the road which traverses it; and the scenery was singularly contrasted with the rich country the retreating army had just

abandoned, for nothing could be more savage, rugged, and uncultivated.

Vittoria, on which the French fell back, is in picturesque situation second to no city in Spain. Placed on a gentle eminence, a level champaign country immediately surrounds it, encircled in the distance by a mountain ridge. On the north-west, the Zadorra is crossed by several bridges; while on the other side, a bold and commanding chain of heights overhangs the road leading to Pampeluna. Across the valley, which there becomes gradually enlarged, are the villages of

guards, the head quarters of "the centre," convoys and equipages, cavalry and artillery occupied the buildings, and crowded the streets; while every hour increased the confusion, as portions of the executive and military departments flocked in, and formed an embarrassing addition to an unmanageable mass of soldiers and civilians, already far too numerous to find accommodation in a town unequal to shelter half that number which occupied it now.

But yet a stranger scene was enacting at Victoria. While the city was brilliantly illuminated in honour of the visit of the king, and a gayer sight could not be fancied than its sparkling interior presented, beyond the walls an army was taking its position, and a multitude of wretched serfs were employed at the point of the bayonet, in throwing up field defences, and assisting those who ruled them with an iron hand, to place their guns in battery, and make the other military dispositions to repel the very force that had come for their deliverance.



**OPENING OF THE CAMPAIGN—AFFAIR OF
ST. MILLAN—THE BIVOUAC.**

Perish the man whose mind is backward now!

KING HENRY V.

CHAPTER III.

OPENING OF THE CAMPAIGN—AFFAIR OF
ST. MILLAN—THE BIVOUAC.

No movement of the Peninsular campaign brings to the retired soldier more interesting reminiscences, than the rapid advance of the British army, from the time it crossed the Douro on the 1st of June until it halted on the evening of the 19th on the banks of the Bayas.

By the able manœuvring of Lord Wellington, Joseph Bonaparte had been obliged to abandon his line of communication with the capital, and fall back on Burgos to concentrate. Contrary to the expectation of the French their retreat

was unmolested; and it was considered very doubtful whether the English commander would break up from his cantonments and become assailant.

But they mistook the man when they imagined that Wellington intended to remain inactive. With characteristic celerity his whole army was put in motion, and the Douro, the Carrion, and the Pisuerga were crossed successively. A demonstration was made on Burgos, and the French were obliged to retire from the place and blow up its defences. Unopposed, the fiery chief reached the valley of the Ebro—and by a rout considered by

tic wildness with exquisite fertility. One while, the columns moved through luxurious valleys intersprinkled with hamlets, vineyards, and flower-gardens; at another, they struggled up mountain ridges, or pressed through Alpine passes overhung with toppling cliffs, making it almost difficult to decide whether the rugged chasm which they traversed had been rifted from the hill-side by an earthquake, or scarped by the hand of man. If the eye turned downwards, there lay sparkling rivers and sunny dells; above, rose naked rocks and splintered precipices; while moving masses of glittering soldiery, now lost, now seen, amid the windings of the rout, gave a panoramic character to the whole, that never will fade from the memory of him who saw it.

Some sharp fighting occurred on the 18th, between the light troops of the rival armies; and two retreating brigades of the enemy were overtaken and brought to action by the rifles and 52d. The affair terminated on the French part, in the loss of much baggage and some three hun-

dred prisoners, although Jourdan, by attacking the British left at Osma, thought to impede the advance of the allies, and afford sufficient time for his own column retiring from Frias to rejoin the main body without loss.

There is nothing more exciting in warfare, than when a small portion of an army operates in the presence of the whole. The feeling that their comrades' eyes are turned on them, stimulates the combatants; while an intense anxiety for the success of their brethren in arms, animates the coldest of the lookers on. This was strongly

cover to the voltigeurs who had formed behind them. After a sharp fusilade the enemy gave ground, and the light brigade was pressing forward, when, suddenly, a fresh column debouched from a ravine, and appeared upon the flank of the assailants. Both rushed on to gain the crest of the hill—and both reached the plateau together. The 52d, bringing their left flank forward in a run, faced round and charged with the bayonet. The conflict was momentary, the French broke, threw away their knapsacks, and fled for the adjoining high grounds; while a wild cheer from the supporting regiment—near enough to witness but not assist in the defeat—bore a soldier's tribute to the gallantry of their companions.

It was the first time that many of the young men who accompanied O'Connor from England had been "under fire," and seen hostile shots exchanged; and as the casualties had been trifling, there was no drawback to damp the *éclat* of a successful affair. Never, indeed, did a young soldier commence a campaign, whose "starry

influences" were more auspicious. The weather was fine—the country through which the line of march lay, rich and picturesque—the troops moved as men move to victory—while a friendly population every where hailed the approach of their deliverers. The peasantry received them with "*vivas*"—the Spanish girl met them with her tambarine and castanets—while the nuns, leaving relic and rosary to gaze upon the glittering bands as they defiled in quick succession, showered rose-leaves from the convent grates; or, if the building was too distant from the line of

with what celerity soldiers arrange their resting-places. Within an hour from the time the advance halted, the mules were up, the baggage unpacked, fires lighted, and supper in full preparation. No delay impeded these important operations; the whole of the martial community were actively employed—one carried wood—another watched the camp kettle; this man mended his shoe—that one cleaned his musket; all were busy—while the light and careless jest, which occasionally elicited a roar of laughter, might have been expected rather from a peaceful merry-making, than from men after a sharp encounter, and preparing for a more decisive conflict on to-morrow.

In the ruined shell of a goatherd's hovel, a party of some seven or eight of the rifles had cantoned themselves for the night. Their beds were laid around the walls, a tablecloth was spread in the centre of the floor, each quickly produced the necessary implements for attacking the contents of the camp kettle; and as all had

contributed to the *cuisine*, the mess presented a strange combination of different viands, united in one general *mélange*. Men engaged warmly in the morning with an enemy are not fastidious in gastronomy in the evening; and an olio that would have poisoned an alderman, comprising salt and fresh beef, fowls, rice, vegetables and a hare, was pronounced exquisite. Each from the grand depot selected the food his heart loved; while a large skin-bottle of country wine, and divers flasks and canteens filled with rum and brandy, indicated that due precautions had been taken to

“Poor Robinson!—His was a short career. He fell at the very moment that victory was certain.”

“Then,” said Major O’Connor, “he fell where the brave should. Come, George—thou hast for the first time heard a bullet hiss! What think you of a smart affair like that of Saint Millan?”

“Think!” replied the enthusiastic boy, for the speaker had scarcely reached sixteen, “I think that the only thing on earth worth living for, is such a scene as the one I shared in this morning.”

“Right, boy”—and O’Connor sighed heavily. “What are the tamer occupations of peaceful life, compared with the brave and brief career the soldier runs? That wild hurra that echoed through the mountain passes, when the French were driven from the heights—what mortal sounds could thrill the heart as they did? Ay, George, let sluggard spirits dream their life away, the brave alone feel that rapturous excitement which makes existence tolerable.”

O'Brien stole a side glance at the speaker; the eye was fired—the cup was at his lips—but yet, even in that maddening hour of high excitement after victory, the worm was gnawing a breast that seemed steeled to softer influences

“How delightful,” said another of the neophytes, who had landed but a few days before from England, “is this wild mode of life! Have we not all that man can desire? and a newness and uncertainty that make it doubly agreeable? Here we are cantoned for the night, and heaven alone can tell where we shall bivouac to-morrow.”

attempt to force our mountain position, endeavoured to turn it by marching in the direction of the road to Oporto. Of course a correspondent movement on our part was indispensable; and on the 29th of September we retreated upon the lines of Torres Vedras. We reached our intrenchments with little molestation, and there occupied the cantonments, where we were afterwards obliged to winter.

“From the perfect state of the lines, an assault upon them was utterly hopeless; and after a careful *reconnaissance*, Junot abandoned all idea of forcing the defences, and changed his operations to a blockade. Nothing could exceed the privations which the French soldiers endured in their miserable cantonments. With scarcely any shelter from the inclemency of winter weather—food in scanty supplies, and of the most wretched description imaginable—disease gaining ground—desertions every day more numerous—while the mortality among the horses was tremendous, as from a scarcity of forage the poor animals were

obliged to feed on rotten straw and vine-twigs. Our situation was better than that of the enemy; particularly in being tolerably supplied with corn and provisions; but as to the huts, I suspect both parties were pretty nearly on a par. We certainly, as they say in Ireland, "kept open house," for the wind and rain entered at every corner.

"Our habitation was constructed of sods, old boards, and branches, and thatched with heather. Straw was too scarce to be obtained; and the heath we substituted for it, whenever the rain fell

ingenious contrivances devised to obtain shelter from the rain. Some extended their blankets upon upright sticks, and stowed themselves beneath it; others put their faith in the tablecloth as a canopy. But these contrivances, however, were generally found wanting; when fully saturated, the cloths brought down the sticks, and the sleeper had the whole collection of water in one plump; and instead of receiving it by the drop, he got it by the gallon. Llewellyn, the little Welshman who was killed at Badajos, was the most comical figure upon earth, as he sate on a truss of straw in the corner, under a tattered umbrella—while O'Shaughnessy and Daly, wrapped in their cloaks, remained all night stoutly at the table, discussing brandy punch, and playing "spoiled five," from a pack of cards reduced to twenty-seven, and whose backs, from divers stains, were to both just as familiar as their faces were. But the last night topped all. The roof, surcharged with moisture, became too weighty for its frail supports, and down it came upon the

unhappy community ; and men and dogs—sleepers and card-players—were all involved in one general ruin. Poor Daly—a six-pound shot closed his account at Salamanca—roared lustily for help. O'Shaughnessy in vain struggled to liberate himself from a ton of wet heather. The little Welshman was all but smothered under his own umbrella ; while the dogs, believing themselves assaulted, bit the legs of the man next the peg they were secured to. Gradually, however, all got disentangled from the wreck, and obtained a lodging from their comrades, who, like ourselves,

young soldier had drawn of campaigning—the goatskin bottle was nearly finished—one after another the revellers stretched themselves on their humble resting-places—in half an hour the bivouac was silent as a peaceful hamlet, and its occupants slept calmly, as if no struggle had occurred that day, and no battle was expected on the morrow.

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VITTORIA.

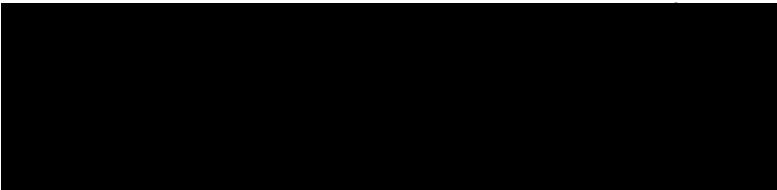
MESSENGER. The English are embattled, you French peers.

CONSTABLE. To horse, you gallant soldiers! straight to
horse!

KING HENRY V.

Stroke and thrust, and flash, and cry
For quarter, or for victory,
Mingle there with the volleying thunder,
Which makes the distant city wonder
How the sounding battle goes,
If with them, or for their foes.

SIEGE OF CORINTH.



CHAPTER IV.

VITTORIA.

SOME rain had fallen during the night, but a lovelier morning than the 21st of June never broke. The sun rose brilliantly, and the blue sky was cloudless. On either side all was prepared for a conflict—a battle was inevitable—the English commander being resolved to offer, and the French marshal to accept the combat.

The enemy's position was well chosen, but it was rather too extended—on one side it rested on the heights of La Puebla, and on the other occupied the ridge above Gamarra Major. The French order of battle embraced two lines—the

armies of Portugal and the South were in the first, and the cavalry and army of the centre were placed in the second in reserve. The entire, with the exception of a small corps, were drawn out in front of Vittoria, and formed on the left bank of the Zadorra, which sweeping round the whole position rendered it truly formidable.

While the front was defended by the river, the great roads to Bayonne and Pampeluna, in the event of any disaster, offered every facility for retreating. In many respects the French position

the French position, was by crossing the bridges of the Zadorra, and they were in every place commanded by the guns, and open to a charge of cavalry. Every thing that could cover an enemy's advance had been carefully removed, and few beside British soldiers would have dared to bring on an action, where so many difficulties were to be encountered in the very opening of the contest.

Soon after the action commenced, Joseph placed himself upon a rising ground that overlooked his right and centre. His own guard were formed in his rear, and a numerous and splendid staff surrounded him. Wellington had chosen an eminence commanding the right bank of the Zadorra, and directly in front of the village of Arinez. Dressed in a short gray coat closely buttoned, his Spanish sash and plumed hat alone marked his rank. He remained for a long time on foot; and while the contest on the heights of Puebla continued doubtful, his glass was turned almost exclusively upon that point, as he watched the progress of the contest with the same coolness

with which he would have regarded the manœuvres of a review.

There never was during the Peninsular campaigns a battle that required nicer combinations and a more correct calculation in time and movements than that of Vittoria. It was impossible to bring up to the immediate proximity for attack every portion of his numerous army, and hence many of Wellington's brigades had bivouacked at a considerable distance from the Zadorra. Part of the country before Vittoria was difficult and rocky; hamlets, enclosures,

the detaching of Morilla's Spanish corps to carry the heights of La Puebla, and drive in the left flank of the enemy. The task was a difficult one. The ground rose abruptly from the valley, and towering to a considerable height, presented a sheer ascent that at first sight appeared almost impracticable. The Spaniards, with great difficulty, although unopposed, reached the summit; and there among rocks and broken ground became sharply engaged with the French left. Unable however to force the enemy from the heights, Sir Rowland detached a British brigade to Morilla's assistance, while, alarmed for the safety of his flank, Jourdan detached troops from his centre to support it. A fierce and protracted combat ensued, and Colonel Cadogan fell at the head of his brigade. Gradually and steadily the British gained ground; and while the eyes of both armies were turned upon the combatants, and the possession of the heights seemed doubtful, the eagle glance of Wellington discovered the forward movement of the Highland tartans, and he announced to his staff that La Puebla was his own.

To support the attack upon the heights, O'Callaghan's brigade of the second division crossed the river and assaulted Sabijana de Alava: Notwithstanding a sharp resistance the place was carried most gallantly; but as the village was in advance, the French made repeated efforts to repossess it. The British, however, held it bravely, until the centre and left having closed up enabled the English general to make a decisive movement of the whole line.

Meanwhile the light divisions had left the road, and formed in close columns behind rocks

were marched from Murgua, to place themselves on the road to Saint Sebastian, and there cut off the enemy's retreat.

While O'Callaghan's brigade was repeatedly attacked in Sabijana de Alava, and some anxiety was caused from the delay of the centre and their exposed position, the opening of Sir Thomas Graham's cannonade announced that the battle had commenced on the left. Presently Lord Dalhousie notified his arrival at Mendonza with the third and seventh divisions, and Lord Wellington ordered a general attack on the whole of the French position.

The light division moved under cover of a thicket and placed itself opposite the enemy's right centre, about two hundred paces from the bridge of Villoses. On the arrival of Lord Dalhousie the signal was given to advance; and at the moment a Spaniard announced that one of the bridges had been left undefended. The mistake was quickly seized upon. A brigade, led by the first rifles, crossed it in a run, and without

loss established itself in a deep ravine, where it was protected from the cannonade.

Nothing could be more beautiful than the operations which followed. The light division carried the bridge of Nanclaus, and the fourth that of Tres Puentes—the divisions of Picton and Dalhousie followed, and the battle became general. The passage of the river—the movement of glittering masses from right to left far as the eye could range—the deafening roar of cannon—the sustained fusilade of the infantry—all was grand and imposing—while the English

Their artillery played at point-blank distance—the village was filled with infantry—the whole place was shrouded in smoke, while the hissing of shot and bursting of shells added to the terrors of the scene.

But this was but a momentary check. Wellington in person directed a fresh assault—the 45th and 74th were led forward, and Arinez carried with the bayonet.

While the battle was raging in the front, the flank movement on Gamarra Major and Abechuco was being executed by the first and fifth divisions. The bridges in front of these villages had been fortified and were obstinately retained; but when the centre was forced at Vittoria, their defenders gave way, and Lord Lynedoch occupied them.

The whole of the enemy's first line were now driven back—but they retired in perfect order, and re-forming close to Vittoria, presented an imposing front protected by nearly one hundred pieces of artillery. A tremendous fire checked

artillery were already posted on an adjacent height, showering upon the crowd below them a storm of shot and shells—the light troops and cavalry still pressed forward—while around, the entire *matériel* of an army was scattered as it had been left, and the whole of a magnificent park, with the exception of a few guns, abandoned to the victors. Night alone closed the pursuit — and favoured by the broken ground the shattered battalions of the usurper effected their escape. The *déroute* was perfect—and two leagues from the town the fiery chief reluctantly

alone to the rapidity with which the French retired, abandoning every thing that could impede their flight, and favoured by a rugged surface, broken roads, and seasonable darkness. Through streets thronged by a victorious soldiery and choked with captured equipages, the English commander and his weary staff rode slowly to their quarters; and the same city that, but two nights since, had illuminated in honour of the King of Spain, was blazing now to welcome the conqueror of the usurper.

On the morning of the 22d, the field of battle and the roads for some miles in the rear exhibited an appearance it seldom falls within human power to witness. There, lay the wreck of of a mighty army; while plunder accumulated during the French successes, and wrung from every part of Spain with unsparing rapacity, was recklessly abandoned to any who chose to seize it. Cannon and caissons, carriages and tumbrels, waggons of every description were overturned or deserted, and a stranger *mélange* could

not be imagined, than these enormous convoys presented to the eye. Here was the personal baggage of a king—there the scenery and decorations of a theatre. Munitions of war were mixed with articles of *virtu*; and with scattered arms and packs, silks, embroidery, plate, and jewels, mingled in wild disorder. One waggon was loaded with money—the next with cartridges; and wounded soldiers, deserted women, and children of every age, every where implored assistance or protection. Here a lady was overtaken in her carriage—in the next calash, was an actress or

liation adopted by the French armies recollected, the enormous collection of plunder abandoned at Vittoria would appear incredible. From the highest to the lowest, all were bearing off some valuables from the country they had overrun. Even the king himself had not proved an exception ; for, rolled in the imperials of his own carriage, some of the finest pictures from the royal galleries were discovered. To facilitate their transport they had been removed from their frames, and were destined by the usurper to add to the unrivalled collection, that, by similar means, had been abstracted from the continent to centre in the Louvre. Wellington, however, interrupted the Spanish paintings in their transit, and the formality of a restoration.





**MOUNTAIN COMBAT—FRENCH BIVOUAC—
MILITARY REMINISCENCES.**

KING RICHARD.—Up with my tent : here will I lie to-
night ;
But where to-morrow ?—Well, all's one
for that.

SHAKSPEARE.

THE RESULTS

The first part of the study was a pilot study in which the effect of the intervention on the self-efficacy of the participants was investigated. The results of this pilot study are presented in Table 1.

The results of the pilot study showed that the intervention had a significant effect on the self-efficacy of the participants. The mean score on the self-efficacy scale increased from 3.5 (SD = 0.5) at baseline to 4.5 (SD = 0.5) at follow-up.

The second part of the study was a randomized controlled trial in which the effect of the intervention on the self-efficacy of the participants was investigated. The results of this trial are presented in Table 2.

The results of the randomized controlled trial showed that the intervention had a significant effect on the self-efficacy of the participants. The mean score on the self-efficacy scale increased from 3.5 (SD = 0.5) at baseline to 4.5 (SD = 0.5) at follow-up.

The results of the randomized controlled trial also showed that the intervention had a significant effect on the self-efficacy of the participants. The mean score on the self-efficacy scale increased from 3.5 (SD = 0.5) at baseline to 4.5 (SD = 0.5) at follow-up.

CHAPTER V.

MOUNTAIN COMBAT—FRENCH BIVOUAC—
MILITARY REMINISCENCES.

AFTER the defeat of Joseph Bonaparte a brilliant continuation of successes attended the British arms. Passages and Paucorbo were taken, Pampeluna strictly blockaded, and the siege of Saint Sebastian commenced. Soult, after his appointment to the command, with a recruited army, endeavoured to succour these fortresses. A series of sanguinary combats in the Pyrenees terminated in his total discomfiture; and, with severe loss on both sides, the French marshal was pursued across the frontier.

No operation could have been more brilliantly

executed than the mountain march of the light division in pursuit of Soult's rear-guard, after he had been defeated before Pampeluna, and driven back upon the passes of the Bidassoa, which, but a few days before, he had forced in the full confidence of succeeding. The French army suffered heavily in their obstinate and repeated efforts to arrest the advance of the English general. On the 31st of July it continued retreating, while five British divisions pressed the pursuit vigorously by Roncesvalles, Maya, and Donna Maria. Nothing could equal the distress

after nineteen hours' continued exertions, during which time a distance of nearly forty miles was traversed over Alpine heights and roads rugged and difficult beyond description, the enemy were overtaken and attacked. A short but smart affair ensued. To extricate the tail of the column and enable the wounded to get away, the French threw a portion of their rear-guard across the river. The rifles instantly attacked the reinforcement—a general fusilade commenced, and continued until night put an end to the affair, when the enemy retreated over the bridge of Yanzi, and the British pickets took possession of it. Both sides lost many men—and a large portion of French baggage fell into the hands of the pursuing force who had moved by St. Estevan.

That night the British light troops lay upon the ground; and next morning moved forward at daybreak. Debouching through the pass at Vera, the hill of Santa Barbara was crossed by the second brigade, while the rifles carried the heights of Echalar, which the French voltigeurs seemed

determined to maintain. As the mountain was obscured by a thick fog, the firing had a strange appearance to those who witnessed it from the valley, occasional flashes only being seen, while every shot was repeated by a hundred echoes. At twilight the enemy's light infantry were driven in; but long after darkness fell the report of musketry continued, until after a few spattering shots a deathlike silence succeeded, and told that the last of the enemy had followed their companions, and abandoned the heights to their assailants.

The next march was but a short one. The

recently endured. Such was the case upon the night of the 4th of August, when the rifles found themselves in the bivouac that the French rear-guard had just quitted. As this post commanded a bridge and ravine, it had been occupied during Soult's advance and retreat—and with more comfort than such rude halting-places generally exhibit, the interior of the wooden huts bore testimony to the taste and ingenuity of their late inhabitants.

The whole appearance of what had been a French bivouac for a fortnight was perfectly characteristic of that nation. Some clever contrivances for cooking, rude arm-racks, a rough table and benches to sit round it, still remained; while one gentleman had amused himself by drawing likenesses of British officers with a burnt stick, in which face figure and costume were most ridiculously caricatured—while another, a votary of the gentle art of poesy, had immortalized the charms of his mistress in doggrel verses scratched upon the boards with the point of a bayonet.

As the party was unusually large, and there was no chance of the baggage being up for a day or two, "a ready-furnished house," as an Irish servant termed the wooden hovel, was indeed a treasure. A fine clear stream was running before the hut; and, never imagining that they should be so unceremoniously ejected from their wooden habitation, the French had collected a quantity of billets for firing, and in their hurry off left a sheep and hare behind them. From the commissary a supply of brandy and biscuit had been obtained—and, at nightfall, a merrier party than

pastrycook! Well—it was decent after all in these French fellows to leave us meat, fire, and lodging. They do now and again exhibit some civility.”

“Yes, they show a marked distinction in their treatment of us and our good allies,” said O’Brien. “It was strongly instanced this morning. While we were forcing the road, a company had scaled the rocks above it to dislodge the tirailleurs who were firing at us from the heights. A poor fellow of mine, whose complexion is uncommonly swarthy, was wounded in the leg and fell. Unfortunately two or three retreating Frenchmen passed accidentally the spot where he was lying, and mistaking him for a Portuguese sharpshooter, stabbed him in several places, and flung him over the precipice; while they raised his comrade from the ground, placed a knapsack under his head, and gave him a drink from a leathern bottle of excellent tinta, which one of them had slung across his shoulder. On coming up we found the sufferer stretched upon the road,

and with difficulty he told us how he had been treated. We of course rendered him some assistance; but Sergeant Corrigan's remarks, as he was binding a cloth round his fractured leg, turned our condolence into laughter. "There now," he said, as he propped the wounded man against a rock—"there you are as snug as if you were in the barracks of Kilkenny. Didn't I always tell ye, that yalla face of yours would bring ye into trouble? No wonder the French mistook ye for a Portagee. It's yourself that could travel from Badajos to Giberralthur, and

of the company in the advance of the rest, when on turning a sudden angle of the road, we perceived not twenty yards off, a wounded voltigeur extended on the ground, and a young comrade supporting him. The Frenchman never attempted to retreat, but smiled when we came up as if he had been expecting us. 'Good morning,' he said, 'I have been waiting for you, gentlemen. My poor friend's leg is broken by a shot, and I could not leave him till you arrived, lest some of these Portuguese brigands should murder him. Pierre,' he continued, as he addressed his companion—'here are the brave English, and you will be taken care of. I will leave you a flask of water, and you will soon be succoured by our noble enemy. Gentlemen, will you honour me by emptying this canteen. You will find it excellent, for I took it from a portly friar two days ago.' There was no need to repeat the invitation. I set the example, the canteen passed from mouth to mouth, and the monk's brandy vanished. The conscript—for he had not joined

above a month—replenished the flask with water from a spring just by. He placed it in his comrade's hand, bade him an affectionate farewell, bowed gracefully to us, threw his musket over his shoulder, and trotted off to join his regiment, which he pointed out upon a distant height. He seemed never for a moment to contemplate the possibility of our sending him in durance to the rear ; and there were about him such kindness and confidence, that on our part no one ever dreamed of detaining him."

“ There never was, and probably never will

would then become untenable. To effect this, he resorted to a night attack. Lapisse made a feint upon the centre, while Ruffin and Vilatte ascended the heights, and for a short time had them in their possession—but Hill recovered them with the bayonet, and repulsed another furious effort made at midnight. Even though the French, by pretending they were Spaniards and deserters, penetrated the British line, they were driven back with frightful slaughter; and so desperately was this night-fighting carried on, that the assailants and the assailed frequently were engaged in a *mêlée* so close, that the men fought with clubbed muskets. All morning the battle raged, and the day assault was as unsuccessful as the night attack had proved. Both armies had lain upon the ground, but none had slept—the trooper with his horse's bridle round his arm—the soldier in momentary expectation of a fresh attempt, listened in every noise for the enemy's approach. No wonder then that a sultry day in July found both sides overcome with heat and hunger—and by a sort of common consent, long before noon,

hostilities ceased, and the French cooked their dinners, while the English had wine and bread served out. Then it was, that a curious scene ensued. A small stream, tributary to the Tagus, flowed through a part of the battle-ground, and separated the combatants. During the pause that the heat of the weather and the weariness of the troops produced, both armies went to the banks of the rivulet for water. The men approached each other fearlessly, threw down their caps and muskets, chatted to each other like old acquaintances, and exchanged their brandy-flasks and

tion. Suddenly—the bugles sounded—the drums beat to arms—many of the rival soldiery shook hands and parted with expressions of mutual esteem, and in ten minutes after they were again at the bayonet's point."

"How miserably a portion of the Spaniards behaved!"

"Yes," said O'Connor, "only for their cowardice the British would not have suffered so dreadfully as they did. But what could be expected from troops led by such miserable officers, and commanded by an imbecile old man like Cuesta? I saw him the day before the battle commenced. He was mounting his horse to look at some brigades of ours; two grenadiers lifted him bodily to the saddle, while an aide-de-camp passed his legs across the horse's croup, and an orderly fixed his foot within the stirrup! The rosary were better fitted for one of his infirmities than the baton of command. When he was with great difficulty dismounted from his charger's back, they transferred him into a lum-

bering coach drawn by half a score of mules, and thus he proceeded in state to his headquarters."

"Pray did not the old boy decimate the run-aways?" inquired a lieutenant.

"No—Lord Wellington interfered, and saved the greater portion of the scoundrels. The lots were drawn—officers and men prepared for immediate execution—when, at the request of the English commander, the condemned were decimated anew, and thus nine out of every ten escaped, and only five officers and thirty men

sently covered with a sheet of fire. Those of the disabled who lay on the outskirts of the field, managed to crawl away, or were carried off by their more fortunate companions who had escaped unhurt; but, unhappily, many gallant sufferers, with 'medicable wounds,' perished in the flames before it was possible to extricate them. I walked over the ground next morning, and, as if to exhibit violent death in all its horrifying variety, the writhed and distorted features of the blackened corpses I passed by, showed in what intolerable agony they had breathed their last!"

"And how did the battle terminate?" inquired one of the lads.

"Aubrey can best answer you," replied O'Connor; "for he was then in the 48th, and saw the last struggle the French made."

"It was a beautiful movement," said the officer to whom the major had referred. "The enemy had been repulsed and followed. The guards, carried onwards by victorious excitement, advanced too far, and found themselves in turn

assailed by the French reserve, and mowed down by an overwhelming fire. They fell back; but as whole sections were swept away, their ranks became disordered, and nothing but their stubborn gallantry prevented a total *déroute*. Their situation was most critical. Had the French cavalry charged home, nothing could have saved them. Lord Wellington saw the danger, and speedily despatched support. A brigade of horse were ordered up, and our regiment moved from the height we occupied to assist our hard-pressed comrades. We came on at double quick, and

to regiment, and passed along the English line; and that wild shout told the advancing enemy that British valour was indomitable. The leading files of the French halted—turned—fell back—and never made another effort. Both armies remained upon the ground; but during the night Victor decamped, and left victory and an undisputed field to his conqueror.”

“Gentlemen,” said O’Connor, “the night wears fast. Methinks we have had enough of martial reminiscences. Come, fill; and let us change war for a softer theme. I’ll give you a toast—‘Lovely woman!’—And I propose, as a suitable accompaniment, that O’Shaughnessy shall favour us with the true detail of one of his amatory adventures.”

“Bravo—nothing can be more apposite to the toast”—responded Captain O’Brien. “Come, Terence, my jewel; forget your national bashfulness for half an hour, and give us the interesting particulars of the first of one of your numerous attempts at matrimony.”

“ Why then, faith,” replied the gallant major, “ my opening effort to become a Benedict was nearly as big a blunder as it well could be. Here, hand me that leathern conveniency”—and he pointed to a wine-skin, “ though upon my conscience, those young scamps have lessened its contents amazingly. Heigh-ho ! It was a queer business, and I will make the story as short as I can.”

Major O'Shaughnessy having fortified himself with a stoup of tinta, thus commenced the affecting narrative of his first disappointment in

**CONFESSIONS OF A GENTLEMAN, WHO
WOULD HAVE MARRIED IF HE COULD.**

Come, come with me, and we will make short work ;
For, by your leaves, you shall not stay alone,
Till holy church incorporate two in one.

ROMEO AND JULIET.

DUKE. What! are you married?

MARIANA. No, my lord.

DUKE. Are you a maid?

MARIANA. No, my lord.

DUKE. A widow then?

MARIANA. Neither, my lord.

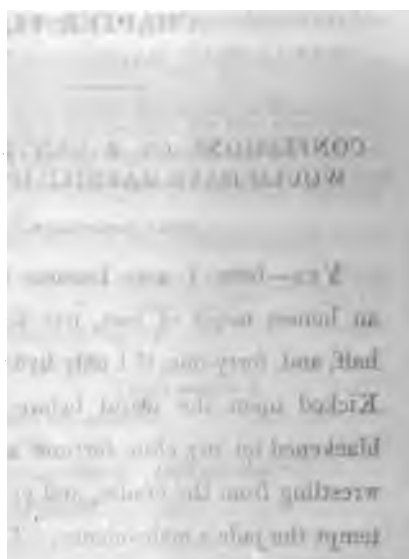
DUKE. Why, thou

Art nothing then : neither maid, widow, nor wife.

MEASURE FOR MEASURE.

1870-1871

1872-1873



CHAPTER VI.

CONFESSIONS OF A GENTLEMAN WHO
WOULD HAVE MARRIED IF HE COULD.

FIRST CONFESSION.

YES—here I am, Terence O'Shaughnessy, an honest major of foot, five feet eleven and a half, and forty-one, if I only live till Michaelmas. Kicked upon the world before the dawn had blackened on my chin, fortune and I have been wrestling from the cradle, and yet I had little to tempt the jade's malevolence. The youngest son of an excellent gentleman, who, with an ill-paid rental of twelve hundred pounds, kept his wife in Bath, and his hounds in Tipperary, my patrimony would have scarcely purchased tools for a high-

wayman, when in my tenth year my father's sister sent for me to Roundwood; for hearing that I was regularly going to the devil, she had determined to redeem me if she could.

My aunt Honor was the widow of a captain of dragoons, who got his quietus in the Low Countries some years before I saw the light. His relict had in compliment to the memory of her departed lord eschewed matrimony, and like a Christian woman, devoted her few and evil days to cards and religion. She was a true specimen of an Irish dowager—her means were small,

-pound-wall of Oran-more, for a bet of a rump and dozen. Of course he was waked and buried like a gentleman—every thing sold by the creditors—my brothers sent to school—and I left to the tender mercy and sole management of the widow of Captain O'Finn.

My aunt's guardianship continued seven years, and at the expiration of that time I was weary of her thrall, and she tired of my tutelage. I was now at an age when some walk of life must be selected and pursued. For any honest avocation I had, as it was universally admitted, neither abilities nor inclination. What was to be done? and how was I to be disposed of? A short deliberation showed that there was but one path for me to follow, and I was handed over to that *refugium peccatorum*, the army, and placed as a volunteer in a regiment just raised, with a promise from the colonel that I should be promoted to the first ensigncy that became vacant.

Great was our mutual joy when Mrs. O'Finn and I were about to part company. I took an

114 CONFESSIONS OF A GENTLEMAN WHO

affectionate leave of all my kindred and acquaintances, and even, in the fulness of my heart, shook hands with the schoolmaster, though in boyhood I had devoted him to the infernal gods for his wanton barbarity. But my tenderest parting was reserved for my next door neighbour, the belle among the village beauties, and presumptive heiress to the virtues and estates of quartermaster Maginn.

Biddy Maginn was a year younger than myself; and to do her justice, a picture of health and comeliness. Lord! what an eye she had! and

between the retired quartermaster and the relict of the defunct dragoon, never had any cordiality existed between the houses. My aunt O'Finn, was as lofty in all things appertaining to her consequence, as if she had been the widow of a common-councilman; and Roger Maginn, having scraped together a good round sum, by the means quartermasters have made money since the days of Julius Cæsar, was not inclined to admit any inferiority on his part. Mrs. O'Finn could never imagine that any circumstances could remove the barrier in dignity which stood between the non-commissioned officer and the captain. While arguing on the saw, that "a living ass is better than a dead lion," Roger contended that he was as good a man as Captain O'Finn; he, Roger, being alive and merry in the town of Ballinamore, while the departed commander had been laid under a "counterpane of daisies," in some counterscarp in the Low Countries. Bidly and I laughed at the feuds of our superiors; and on the evening of a desperate blow-up,

we met at sunset in the garden—agreed that the old people were fools—and resolved that nothing should interrupt our friendly relations. Of course the treaty was ratified with a kiss, for I recollect that next morning the cats were heavily censured for capsizing a box of mignonette.

No wonder then that I parted from Biddy with regret. I sat with her till we heard the quartermaster scrape his feet at the hall-door on his return from his club—and kissing poor Biddy tenderly, as Roger entered by the front, I levanted by the back door. I fancied myself

quarter she had never marked honours—or for the last week closed an eye with rheumatism and lumbago. Still as these *jérémiades* covered my small allowance, they were welcome as a lover's billet. Of course, in these despatches the neighbours were duly mentioned, and every calamity occurring since her "last," was faithfully chronicled. The Maginns held a conspicuous place in my aunt's quarterly notices. Biddy had got a new gown—or Biddy had got a new piano—but since the dragoons had come to town there was no bearing her. Young Hastings was never out of the house—she hoped it would end well—but every body knew a light dragoon could have little respect for the daughter of a quartermaster; and Mrs. O'Finn ended her observations by hinting, that if Roger went seldomer to his club, and Biddy more frequently to mass, why probably in the end it would be better for both of them.

I re-entered the well-remembered street of Ballinamore late in the evening, after an absence

of three years. My aunt was on a visit, and she had taken that as a convenient season for having her domicile newly painted. I halted at the inn, and after dinner strolled over the way to visit my quondam acquaintances, the Maginns.

If I had intended a surprise, my design would have been a failure. The quartermaster's establishment were on the *qui vive*. The fact was, that since the removal of the dragoons, Ballinamore had been dull as ditch-water; the arrival of a stranger in a postchaise, of course, had created a sensation in the place, and before

hand, swore it was an agreeable surprise, ushered me into the dining-room, and called for hot water and tumblers. We sat down. Deeply did he interest himself in all that had befallen me—deeply regret the absence of my honoured aunt—but I must not stay at the inn, I should be his guest; and to my astonishment, it was announced that the gentleman in the red collar had been already despatched to transport my luggage to the house. Excuses were idle. Roger's domicile was to be head-quarters, and when I remembered my old flame, Biddy, I concluded that I might for the short time I had to stay, be in a less agreeable establishment than the honest quartermaster's.

I was mortified to hear that Biddy had been indisposed. It was a bad cold, she had not been out for a month, but she would muffle herself, and meet me in the drawing-room. This, too, was unluckily a night of great importance in the club. The new curate was to be balloted for; Roger had proposed him; and, *ergo*, Roger, as a true man, was bound to be present at the cere-

mony. The thing was readily arranged. We finished a second tumbler, the quartermaster betook himself to the King's Arms, and the lieutenant, meaning myself, to the drawing-room of my old inamorata.

There was a visible change in Roger's domicile. The house was newly papered; and leaving the livery aside, there was a great increase of gentility throughout the whole establishment. Instead of bounding to the presence, by three stairs at a time as I used to do in lang syne, I was ceremoniously paraded to the lady's chamber by him of the beefsteak collar; and there reclining lau-

although the rosiness of seventeen was gone, and a delicacy that almost indicated bad health had succeeded; "but," thought I, "it's all owing to the cold."

There was a guarded propriety in Biddy's bearing, that appeared almost unnatural. The warm advances of old friendship were repressed, and one who had mounted a flower-pot to kiss me across a hedge, recoiled from any exhibition of our former tenderness. Well, it was all as it should be. Then I was a boy, and now a man. Young women cannot be too particular, and Biddy Maginn rose higher in my estimation.

Biddy was stouter than she promised to be when we parted, but the eye was as dark and lustrous, and the ankle as taper as when it last had demolished a geranium. Gradually her reserve abated—old feelings removed a constrained formality—we laughed and talked—ay—and kissed as we had done formerly; and when the old quartermaster's latch-key was heard unclosing the street-door, I found myself admitting

in confidence and a whisper, that "I would marry if I could." What reply Biddy would have returned I cannot tell, for Roger summoned me to the parlour, and as her cold prevented her from venturing down, she bade me an affectionate good-night. Of course she kissed me at parting—and it was done as ardently and innocently as if the hawthorn hedge divided us.

Roger had left his companions earlier than he usually did in order to honour me his guest. The new butler paraded oysters, and down we

Biddy was a boy. Never was such a time to purchase on. More regiments to be raised, and promotion will be at a discount. Sir Hugh Haughton married a stockbroker's widow with half a plum, and paid in the two thousand I had lent him. Zounds! if Biddy were a boy, and that money well applied, I would have her a regiment in a twelvemonth."

"Phew!" I thought to myself. "I see what the old fellow is driving at."

"There never would be such another opportunity," Roger continued. "An increased force will produce an increased difficulty in effecting it. Men will be worth their own weight in money—and d—n me, a fellow who could raise a few, might have any thing he asked for."

I remarked that, with some influence and a good round sum, recruits might still be found.

"Ay, easy enough, and not much money either, if one knew how to go about the thing. Get two or three smart chaps—let them watch fairs and patterns—mind their hits when the

bumpkins got drunk, and find out when fellows were hiding from a warrant. D—n me, I would raise a hundred, while you would say Jack Robison. Pay a friendly magistrate; attest the scoundrels before they were sober enough to cry off; bundle them to the regiment next morning; and if a rascal ran away after the commanding officer passed a receipt for him, why all the better, for you could relist him when he came home again.”

I listened attentively, though in all this the cloven foot appeared. The whole was the plan

Terence, had not the stuff to push you on. What the devil signifies family, and blood, and all that balderdash. There's your aunt—worthy woman—but sky-high about a dead captain. D—n me—all folly. Were I a young man, I'd get hold of some girl with the wherewithal, and I would double-distance half the highfliers for a colonelcy."

This was pretty significant—Roger had come to the scratch, and there was no mistaking him. We separated for the night. I dreamed, and in fancy was blessed with a wife, and honoured with a command. Nothing could be more entrancing than my visions; and when the quartermaster's *maître d'hôtel* roused me in the morning I was engaged in a friendly argument with my beloved Biddy, as to which of his grandfathers our heir should be called after, and whether the lovely babe should be christened Roderick or Roger.

Biddy was not at breakfast; the confounded cold still confined her to her apartment; but she

hoped to meet me at dinner, and I must endure her absence until then as I best could. Having engaged to return at five, I walked out to visit my former acquaintances. From all of them I received a warm welcome, and all exhibited some surprise at hearing that I was domesticated with the quartermaster. I comprehended the cause immediately. My aunt and Roger had probably a fresh quarrel; but his delicacy had prevented him from communicating it. This certainly increased my respect for the worthy man, and made me estimate his hospitality the more highly.

schoolfellow on horseback, and great was our mutual delight at meeting so unexpectedly. We were both hurried however, and consequently our greeting was a short one. After a few general questions and replies, we were on the point of separating, when my friend pulled up.

“But where are you hanging out?” said Frederick Maunsell. “I know your aunt is absent.”

“I am at old Maginn’s.”

“The devil you are! Of course you heard all about Bidy and young Hastings?”

“Not a syllable. Tell it to me.”

“I have not time — it’s a long story; but come to breakfast, and I’ll give you all the particulars in the morning. Adieu!” He struck the spurs into his horse, and cantered off singing,

“Oh! she loved a bold dragoon,
With his long sword, saddle, bridle.”

I was thunderstruck. “Confound the dragoon!” thought I, “and his long sword, saddle, and bridle, into the bargain. Gad—I wish Maunsell had

told me what it was. Well—what suppose I ask Biddy herself?" I had half resolved that evening to have asked her a very different question; but, faith, I determined now to make some inquiries touching Cornet Hastings of the 13th, before Miss Biddy Maginn should be invited to become Mrs. O'Shaughnessy.

My host announced that dinner was quite ready, and I found Biddy in the eating-room. She was prettily dressed as an invalid should be; and notwithstanding her cold looked remarkably handsome. I would to a dead certainty have been

to know what Maunsell's allusion pointed at, and I casually threw out a feeler.

"And you are so dull, you say? Yes, Biddy, you must miss the dragoons sadly. By the way, there was a friend of mine here. Did you know Tom Hastings?"

I never saw an elderly gentleman and his daughter more confused. Biddy blushed like a peony, and Roger seemed desperately bothered. At last the quartermaster responded,

"Fact is—as a military man, showed the cavalry some attention—constantly at the house— anxious to be civil—helped them to make out forage—but damned wild—obliged to cut, and keep them at a distance."

"Ay, Maunsell hinted something of that."

I thought Biddy would have fainted, and Roger grew red as the footman's collar.

"Pshaw! d—d gossiping chap that Maunsell. Young Hastings—infernal hemp—used to ride with Biddy. Persuaded her to get on a horse of his—ran away—threw her—confined at an

130 CONFESSIONS OF A GENTLEMAN WHO

inn for a week — never admitted him to my house afterwards.”

Oh! here was the whole mystery unravelled! No wonder Roger was indignant, and that Biddy would redden at the recollection. It was devilish unhandsome of Mr. Hastings; and I expressed my opinion in a way that evidently pleased my host and his heiress, and showed how much I disapproved of the conduct of that *roué* the dragoon.

My fair friend rose to leave us. Her shawl caught in the chair, and I was struck with the striking change a few years had effected in my

self, woman! Tighten yourself, or I won't be plased!"

Well, here was a load of anxiety removed, and Maunsell's mischievous inuendo satisfactorily explained away. Biddy was right in resenting the carelessness that exposed her to ridicule and danger; and it was a proper feeling in the old quartermaster, to cut the man who would mount his heiress on a break-neck horse. Gradually we resumed the conversation of last night—there was the regiment if I chose to have it—and when Roger departed for the club, I made up my mind, while ascending the stairs, to make a splice with Biddy, and become Colonel O'Shaughnessy.

Thus determined, I need not particularize what passed upon the sofa. My wooing was short, sharp, and decisive; and no affected delicacy restrained Biddy from confessing that the flame was mutual. My fears had been moonshine; my suspicions groundless. Biddy had not valued the dragoon a brass button; and—poor soul—

she hid her head upon my shoulder, and, in a soft whisper, acknowledged that she never had cared a *tranceine** for any body in the wide world but myself!

It was a moment of exquisite delight. I told her of my prospects, and mentioned the quartermaster's conversation. Biddy listened with deep attention. She blushed—strove to speak—stopped—was embarrassed. I pressed her to be courageous; and at last, she deposited her head upon my breast, and bashfully hinted that Roger was old—avarice was the vice of age—he was

self—such a proposition would appear so indelicate; but still a husband's interests were too dear to be sacrificed to maiden timidity.

I never estimated Biddy's worth till now. She united the foresight of a sage, with the devotion of a woman. I would have been insensible; indeed, had I not testified my regard and admiration; and Biddy was still resting on my shoulder; when the quartermaster's latch-key announced his return from the club.

After supper I apprized Roger of my passion for his daughter, and modestly admitted that I had found favour in her sight. He heard my communication, and frankly confessed that I was a son-in-law he most approved of. Emboldened by the favourable reception of my suit, I ventured to hint at an early day, and pleaded "a short leave between returns," for precipitancy. The quartermaster met me like a man.

"When people wished to marry, why delay was balderdash. Matters could be quickly and quietly managed. His money was ready—no

134 CONFESSIONS OF A GENTLEMAN WHO

bonds or post obits—a clean thousand in hand, and another the moment an opening to purchase a step should occur. No use in mincing matters among friends. Mrs. O’Finn was an excellent woman. She was a true friend, and a good Catholic; but d—n it, she had old-world notions about family, and in pride the devil was a fool to her. If she came home before the ceremony, there would be an endless fuss—and Roger concluded by suggesting that we should be married the next evening, and give my honoured aunt an agreeable surprise.”

master undertook to conduct the nuptial preparations; a friend of his would perform the ceremony, and the quieter the thing was done the better. After breakfast he set out to complete all matrimonial arrangements; and I strolled into the garden to ruminate on my approaching happiness, and bless Heaven for the treasure I was destined to possess in Bidy Maginn.

No place could have been more appropriately selected for tender meditation. *There* was the conscious hedge, that had witnessed the first kiss of love; ay, and for aught I knew to the contrary, the identical flower-pot on which her sylphic form had rested; sylphic it was no longer, for the slender girl had ripened into a stout and comely gentlewoman; and she would be mine—mine that very evening.

“ Ah! Terence,” I said in an under tone, “ Few men at twenty-one have drawn such a prize. A thousand pounds ready cash—a regiment in perspective—a wife in hand; and such a wife—young, artless, tender, and attached. By

every thing matrimonial, you have the look of thousands?"

My soliloquy was interrupted by a noise on the other side of the fence. I looked over. It was my aunt's maid; and great was our mutual astonishment! Judy blessed herself, as she ejaculated—

“Holy Virgin! Master Terence, is that you?”

I satisfied her of my identity, and learned to my unspeakable surprise that my aunt had returned unexpectedly, and that she had not the remotest suspicion that her affectionate nephew,

the devil drove ye here? Lord pardon me for mentioning him!"

"My duty, dear aunt. I am but a week landed from Jersey, and could not rest till I got leave from the colonel to run down between returns, and pay you a hurried visit. Lord! How well you look!"

"Ah! then, Terence, jewel, it's hard for me to look well, considering the way I have been fretted by the tenants, and afflicted with the lumbago. Denis Clark—may the widow's curse follow him wherever he goes!—bundled off to America with a neighbour's wife, and a year and a half's rent along with her, the thief! And then, since Holland tide, I have not had a day's health."

"Well, from your looks I should never have supposed it. But you were visiting at Meldrum Castle?"

"Yes, faith, and a dear visit it was. Nothing but half-crown whist, and unlimited brag. Lost seventeen points last Saturday night. It was

Sunday morning. Christ pardon us for playing! But what was that to my luck yesterday evening. Bragged twice for large pools, with red nines and black knaves; and Mrs. Cooney, both times, shewed natural aces! If ever woman sold herself, she has. The Lord stand between us and evil! Well, Terence, you'll be expecting your quarter's allowance. We'll make it out some how—Heigh ho! Between bad cards, and runaway tenants, I can't attend to my soul as I ought, and Holy Week coming!"

I expressed due sympathy for her losses, and regretted that her health, bodily and spiritual,

down upon the nail, and three hundred a year falling her mother. I asked her here on a visit, and though he had ridden past without calling on me, wrote him my plan, and invited him to meet her. What do you think, Terence, was his reply? Why, that Miss Mac Teggart might go to Bath, for he would have no call to my swivel-eyed customers. There was a return for my kindness; as if a woman with five thousand *down*, and three hundred a year in expectation, was required to look straight. Ah! Terence, I wish you had been here. She went to Dublin, and was picked up in a fortnight."

Egad! here was an excellent opportunity to broach my own success. There could be no harm in making the commander's widow a confidante; and, after all, she had a claim upon me as my early protectress.

"My dear aunt, I cannot be surprised at your indignation. Arthur was a fool, and lost an opportunity that never may occur again. In fact, my dear madam, I intended to have given

you an agreeable surprise. I—I—I am on—
the very brink of matrimony!”

“Holy Bridget!” exclaimed Mrs. O’Finn, as
she crossed herself devoutly.

“Yes, ma’am. I am engaged to a lady with
two thousand pounds.”

“Is it *ready*, Terence?” said my aunt.

“Down on the table, before the priest puts on
his vestment.”

“Arrah—my blessing attend ye, Terence. I
knew you would come to good.”

“Is she young?”

“What is her father, Terence?”

“A soldier, ma'am.”

“Lord—quite enough. He's by profession a gentleman; and we can't expect to find every day descendants from the kings of Connaught, like the O'Shaughnessys and the O'Finns. But when is it to take place, Terence?”

“Why, faith, ma'am, it was a bit of a secret; but I can keep nothing from you.”

“And why should ye. Haven't I been to you more than a mother, Terence?”

“I am to be married this evening?”

“This evening! Holy Saint Patrick! and you're sure of the money. It's not a rent-charge—nothing of bills or bonds?”

“Nothing but bank notes; nothing but the *aragudh-sheese*.”*

“Ogh! my blessing be about ye night and day. Arrah, Terence, what's her name?”

“You'll not mention it. We want the thing done quietly.”

* *Anglice*, cash down.

“Augh, Terence; and do you think I would let any thing ye told me slip? By this cross,”—and Mrs. O’Finn bisected the forefinger of her left hand with the corresponding digit of the right one; “the face of clay shall never be the wiser of any thing ye mention!”

After this desperate adjuration there was no refusing my aunt’s request.

“You know her well,”—and I looked extremely cunning.

“Do I, Terence? Let me see—I have it, It’s Ellen Robinson. No—though her money’s safe, there’s but five hundred ready.”

“ Who?—who, for the sake of heaven?”

“ Biddy Maginn!”

“ Oh, Jasus!” ejaculated the captain’s relict, as she sank upon a chair. “ I’m murdered! Give me my salts, there. Terence O’Shaughnessy, don’t touch me. I put the cross between us,”—and she made a crural flourish with her hand. “ You have finished me, ye villain. Holy Virgin! what sins have I committed, that I should be disgraced in my old age? Meat never crossed my lips of a Friday; I was regular at mass, and never missed confession; and, when, the company were honest, played as fair as every body else. I wish I was at peace with poor dear Patt O’Finn. Oh! murder! murder!”

I stared in amazement. If Roger Maginn had been a highwayman, his daughter could not have been an object of greater horror to Mrs. O’Finn. At last I mustered words to attempt to reason with her, but to my desultory appeals she returned abuse fit only for a pickpocket to receive.

“ Hear me, madam.”

“ Oh, you common *omnadawn!*”

“ For heaven’s sake, listen !”

“ Oh ! that the O’Finns and the O’Shaughnessys should be disgraced by a mean-spirited *gommouge†* of your kind !”

“ You won’t hear me.”

“ Biddy Maginn !” she exclaimed. “ Why bad as my poor brother, your father, was, and though he too married a devil that helped to ruin him, she was at all events a lady in her own right, and cousin-german to Lord Lowestoffe. But—you—you unfortunate disciple.”

I began to wax warm for my aunt compli-

“ And is it,” said I, “ because Miss Maginn can’t count her pedigree from Fin Macoul, that she should not discharge the duties of a wife.”

My aunt broke in upon me.

“ There’s one thing certain, that she’ll discharge the duties of a mother. Heavens! if you had married a girl with only a *blast*,* your connexions might brazen it out. But a woman in such a barefaced condition—as if her staying in the house these three months, could blind the neighbours, and close their mouths.”

“ Well, in the devil’s name, will you say what objection exists to Biddy Maginn making me a husband to-night?”

“ And a papa in three months afterwards!” rejoined my loving aunt.

If a shell burst in the bivouac, I could not have been more electrified. Dark suspicions flashed across my mind—a host of circumstances confirmed my doubts—and I implored the widow of the defunct dragoon to tell me all she knew.

* Anglice, a *flaw of the reputation*.

It was a simple, although, as far as I was concerned, not a flattering narrative. Bidy had commenced an equestrian novitiate under the tutelage of Lieutenant Hastings. Her progress in the art of horsemanship was no doubt very satisfactory, and the pupil and the professor frequently rode out *tête-à-tête*. Bidy, poor soul, was fearful of exhibiting any *maladresse*, and of course, roads less frequented than the king's highway were generally chosen for her riding lessons. Gradually these excursions became more extensive; twilight, and in summer too, often

ordered off; and it was whispered that there had been a desperate blow-up between the young lady's preceptor the lieutenant, and her papa the quartermaster. Once only had Bidly ventured out upon the mall; but she was cut dead by her quondam acquaintances. From that day she seldom appeared abroad; and when she did, it was always in the evening, and even then closely muffled up. No wonder scandal was rife touching the causes of her seclusion. A few charitably ascribed it to bad health—others to disappointment—but the greater proportion of the fair sex attributed her confinement to the true cause, and whispered that Miss Maginn was “as ladies wished to be, who love their lords.”

Here was a solution to the mystery! It was now pretty easy to comprehend why Bidly was swathed like a mummy, and Roger so ready with his cash. No wonder the *demoiselle* was anxious to abridge delay, and the old crimp so obliging in procuring a priest and preparing all requisite matters for immediate hymeneals. What was to

148 CONFESSIONS OF A GENTLEMAN WHO

be done? What, but denounce the frail fair one, and annihilate that villain, her father. Without a word of explanation I caught up my hat—and left the house in a hurry, and Mrs. O'Finn in a state of nervousness that threatened to become hysterical.

When I reached the quarter-master's habitation, I hastened to my own apartment and got my traps together in double quick. I intended to have abdicated quietly, and favoured the intended Mrs. O'Shaughnessey with an epistle communicating the reasons that induced me to

“He’s a useful person,” I replied drily;
“and all you want is a son-in-law.”

“A what?” exclaimed the father of Miss Biddy.

“A son-in-law?”

“Why what the devil do you mean?”

“Not a jot more or less than what I say. You have procured the priest, but I suspect the bridegroom will not be forthcoming.”

“Zounds, sir! do you mean to treat my daughter with disrespect?”

“Upon consideration, it would be hardly fair to deprive my old friend Hastings of his pupil. Why, with another week’s private tuition, Biddy might offer her services to Astley.”

“Sir,—if you mean to be impertinent,”—and Roger began to bluster, while the noise brought the footman to the hall, and Miss Biddy to the banisters ‘shawled to the nose.’ I began to lose temper.

“Why, you infernal old crimp!”

“You audacious young scoundrel!”

150 . CONFESSIONS OF A GENTLEMAN WHO

“ Oh, Jasus ! gentlemen ! Pace for the sake of the blessed mother ! ” cried the butler from below.

“ Father, jewel. Terence, my only love ! ” screamed Miss Bidy, over the staircase.—
“ What is the matter ! ”

“ He wants to be off, ” roared the quarter-master.

“ Stop, Terence, or you'll have my life to answer for. ”

“ Lord, Bidy, how fat you are grown ! ”

“ You shall fulfil your promise, ” cried Roger,

“Don’t let him out !” roared her sire.

The gentleman with the beef-steak collar made a demonstration to interrupt my retreat, and in return received a box in the ear that sent him half way down the kitchen stairs.

“There,” I said, “give that to the old rogue, your master, with my best compliments”—and bounding from the hall door, Bidy Maginn like Lord Ullin’s daughter, “was left lamenting !”

Well, there is no describing the *rookawn** a blow up like this occasioned in a country town. I was unmercifully quizzed; but the quartermaster and his heiress found it advisable to abdicate. Roger removed his household goods to the metropolis—Miss Bidy favoured him in due time with a grandsou; and when I returned from South America, I learned that “this lost love of mine” had accompanied a Welsh licutenant to the hymeneal altar, who not being “over particular” about trifles, had obtained on the

* *Anglice*, confusion.

same morning a wife, an heir, and an estate—
with Roger's blessing into the bargain.

“Why, what a fool you were Terence”—said
O'Connor, “had you but taken fortune at the
flood, and made Miss Biddy Mrs. O'Shaugh-
nessy, what between cash and crimping, you
might have been now commanding a brigade.”

“Ay—when you know how I failed twice
afterwards, you will admit that I have been an
unlucky suitor.”

“What, two efforts more—and still doomed
to single blessedness?”

cavalry had long since detached their pickets—and every necessary precaution had been taken to guard against surprise. The hum from the distant bivouacs became fainter—the fires sparkled more brightly in the gloom — group after group betook themselves to sleep — the tattoo echoed through the hills—“ while the deep war-drum’s sound announced the close of day.”

RIGHTS

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**NIGHT IN THE PYRENEES—THE MURDERED
SENTINEL—AND THE GUERILLA CHIEF.**

From camp to camp, through the foul womb of night,
The hum of either army stilly sounds,
That the fix'd sentinels almost receive
The secret whispers of each other's watch.

KING HENRY V.

Who's there? Stand, and unfold yourself.

HAMLET.

Go—get some water,
And wash this filthy witness from your hand.

MACBETH.

THE
MILITARY
RECORDS
OF THE
UNITED STATES
ARMY
AND
NAVY
FROM
1782 TO
1890
BY
JOHN S. MANNING
AND
JAMES H. MANNING
NEW YORK
1890

CHAPTER VII.

NIGHT IN THE PYRENEES—THE MURDERED
SENTINEL—AND THE GUERRILLA CHIEF.

IT was a clear and starry night, the moon had not risen, but the dark masses of mountain occupied by the rival armies, was visible for many a mile. An hundred thousand warriors were stretched upon the adjacent hills, and yet there were frequent intervals, when the rifle outpost was silent as a hermit's cell. Few sounds rose above the rush of the river, which swollen by the heavy rains tumbled over a ridge of rock, and deadened, in its roar of waters, noises that otherwise would have fallen upon the ear. Far off, occasional sparkles from the watch-fires showed

the position of the more distant brigades, while at times the sharp challenge and prompt reply rose above the stillness of the night, and indicated that the sentinels were on the alert, and the out-post officer making his "lonely round."

The bridge where Major O'Connor with three companies of his regiment was posted, was a pass of considerable importance; and, from the proximity of a French picket a vigilant look out was indispensable. The severity of the weather, fatiguing duty, and privations in food and shelter, consequent on being cantoned in a mountain position, had produced a partial discontent; and

posts of their command, to satisfy themselves that the sentries were on the *qui vive*; thus guarding against surprise from the enemy, and making any attempt to quit the lines, without observation, almost an impossibility to a deserter.

When so much regarding general safety and prevention of crime depended on individual character and conduct, officers were strictly enjoined, when on duty at any advanced post, to place no sentry contiguous to a French picket, in whose steadiness the greatest confidence could not be reposed. Only the bridge in front of the rifle bivouac separated the troops that occupied it from the French tirailleurs; each of its extremities was held by a rival sentinel. The respective pickets were scarcely a pistol-shot asunder. It was the most advanced, the most important of the entire outposts, and none but an approved soldier was ever placed upon the bridge after beat of tattoo.

That an experienced and intelligent officer, like the commandant of the rifles, should feel the

great responsibility of the duty he was intrusted with, may be imagined, and at all hours of the night he visited his sentries in person. It was near morning, when silently rising from the bear-skin on which he lay, he took his cloak and sabre, and left the bivouac unnoticed by his sleeping comrades, whose slumbers appeared as sound as if the enemy were beyond the Pyrenees.

He paused at the door of the hovel, and for a few moments gazed in silent admiration at the strange and stupendous objects with which he was on every side surrounded. In front, far as

the sun could reach, the French and English

revealed or hid them. The deep repose of mid-night—the immediate proximity of an enemy—the chance that the next sun would set upon a field of slaughter, and that the unearthly stillness that reigned in these solitudes now, would, in a few hours, be succeeded by the rush of battle, and roar of red artillery—all weighed upon the heart, and rendered this mountain night-scene, even to a careless spirit, grand, solemn, and imposing.

O'Connor found the picket duly vigilant, and learned from the subaltern in command, that the chain of sentries had been recently visited, and all were found at their posts. The night, it appeared, had passed without alarm, the French bivouacs had been unusually quiet, and no movement had been observed at the outposts, except that occasioned by the ordinary reliefs along the line. O'Connor inquired who had charge of the bridge; and when the sergeant named the man, he determined to proceed thither before he returned to his humble bearskin.

The sentry whose fidelity had excited the suspicion of his commanding officer, had more than once proved himself a daring soldier; he had volunteered two forlorn hopes, and was always foremost when skirmishing with the French light troops. But O'Connor, who carefully studied the individual character of those placed under him, had seen in the suspected man much to dislike. In disposition he was dark, violent, and unforgiving; and, even in his gallantry, there was a reckless ferocity regarding human life, that made his officers detest him. His dissipated

lying on the ground, and it was quite evident that the late owner had gone over to the enemy.

This discovery mortified the soldier deeply. Since the British army had entered the Pyrenees, frequent as the offence had been, O'Connor had not lost a single man by desertion. The occurrence was annoying, and he blamed himself for not using greater circumspection. To prevent any recurrence of the crime, he determined for the future to double the sentries along the chain, and as the time for relief was not distant, he resolved to remain until it arrived, and watch the bridge himself.

He took up the deserter's rifle, and ascertained that it was primed and loaded. All was quiet—every sound was hushed, or so faint as not to be heard above the rushing of the waters. In the clear starlight he could perceive the French sentinel moving slowly backwards and forwards, occasionally stopping to look over the battlement of the bridge at the swollen river, as it forced its current through the narrow arch; and then re-

suming his measured step, humming some popular canzonet, which he had first heard under a sunny sky, and probably from lips he loved.

Ten minutes had elapsed. O'Connor kept a cautious guard, and in a short time the relief might be expected. A noise from the further side of the bridge suddenly arrested his attention. The French sentry challenged—a voice replied—and next moment a dark figure glided into the light, and closed with the tirailleur. A brief colloquy ensued, and the Frenchman appeared not quite satisfied with his visiter, as he kept his

denly the unknown sprang within the sentry's guard—a blow was struck—a loud exclamation, and a deep groan succeeded, and then one figure only was visible in the starlight. That was the stranger's! and at a rapid pace he crossed the bridge, and confronted the English sentinel.

“Stand—or I'll fire!”

“Hold—for God's sake!”—replied a voice in tolerable English. “I am a Spaniard, and a friend.”

But the sentinel was resolute.

“Friend or foe,” he cried, “keep your distance.”

“By Heaven!” rejoined the Spaniard, “I must and will cross over.”

“One movement of hand or foot,” returned the sentry coolly, “and you are a dead man.”

“Am I not a faithful ally? What fear ye?”

“I fear nothing,” replied the English soldier.

“Have I not this moment rid you of an enemy?” said the stranger.

“Then have you done a cowardly and murderous action,” was the sentry’s answer.

“I must pass—give way, or I’ll force it.”

“My finger is on the trigger,” returned the soldier. “Another step—another whisper—and I’ll send a bullet through your heart.”

Both paused—and for half a minute neither spoke. They stood almost within arm’s length; the soldier with the rifle at his shoulder, the Spaniard with a knife grasped firmly in a hand, still reeking with the blood of the slaughtered Frenchman. A noise was heard—the measured

steps of an advancing party approached, and in a

mand given to the guard to look to his safe custody

“Think ye,” he said, “that I am likely to return to the French outpost, and inform the detachment that I stabbed their comrade to the heart?” — and a loud laugh, as in derision, accompanied the observation.

The dark mantillo in which the Spaniard was enveloped, had hitherto concealed his person, and in the waning starlight, nothing save a tall figure and swarthy features could be discovered; but when, stopping before the fire around which the picket were collected, the blaze revealed his face, one glance assured O'Connor that his prisoner was no ordinary man.

The stranger was scarcely thirty, and were it not for his stern and vindictive expression, his face would have been singularly handsome. The dark and brilliant eye sparkled from beneath a brow which appeared to darken at the slightest contradiction; the nose was finely formed; the

teeth white and regular, while coal-black hair curling in rich profusion to his shoulders, and a high and noble forehead, completed the outlines of a countenance, that none could deny was handsome, but few would wish to look upon a second time.

A trifling incident marked the character of the stranger. The officer of the picket presented a canteen to his commander, and then politely offered it to the prisoner. He bowed, and put forward his hand; but the subaltern started—for in the blaze he observed that it was discoloured to the wrist.

rickled down a rock beside the watch-fire; then taking the canteen, he drank and returned it with a bow.

“Are you the commandant at this fort?” he inquired, as he turned to O'Connor.

“I am,” was the reply.

“Your name, sir?”

The soldier gave it.

“Indeed!”—exclaimed the Spaniard. “Are you he who led the assault at Badajoz?”

The soldier bowed, as he replied in the affirmative.

“Enough—I would speak with you aside;” and followed by O'Connor, he walked some distance from the watch-fire.

“You have seen me before,” said the Spaniard sharply.

“It is very possible,” was the soldier's reply. “Under which of the Spanish commanders have you served?”

“Under none,” replied the stranger.

“Are you not a soldier, then? Just now you

hinted that more than one Frenchman had fallen by your hand."

"Yes; some have perished by my hand, and many a hundred by my order," returned the prisoner.

"Indeed? May I inquire who it is that I am addressing?"

"Willingly. Heard ye ever the name of Vicente Moreno mentioned?" asked the Spaniard.

"Moreno? Him whom the French hanged at Grenada, in the presence of his wife and children."

“Ay,” said the Spaniard—“the martyr of liberty was well and speedily avenged. Before the second moon rose above the grave of the slaughtered soldier, seventy French captains were shot like mangy hounds, by my order, in the market-place at Marbella.”

“Ha!”—exclaimed O’Connor, as he looked keenly at the Spaniard—“am I then speaking to—”

“Moreno, the Guerilla, the younger brother of him they murdered in the square of Grenada, stands beside you.”

O’Connor started! “And was the assassin of the French sentinel the far-famed chieftain of the mountain bands of Ronda? He whose exploits wore rather the semblance of romance than the colour of reality; whose career had been so successful and so sanguinary, that it was computed, from the hour he devoted himself to avenge his brother’s death, that more than two thousand French had been slain by the bands he commanded!” While O’Connor recollected the ruthless cha-

racter of this dreaded chief, all marvel at the scene upon the bridge ceased; for to stab an enemy who was in his way, would not be a consideration of a pin's fee to one, who in cold blood had shot his prisoners by the dozen.

"Doubtless you are both hungry and fatigued," said the soldier, resuming his conversation with the Guerilla. "Our bivouac is hard by, and, such as it is, there we have food and shelter. Will you accept what I can offer?"

"Most willingly," replied Moreno; "both will be welcome. For thirty hours I have tasted no food, and have been hiding in the rocks all

to the heart. "Vengeance is what I think of when awake—vengeance is what I dream of sleeping!"

"Have you been harassing the enemy?"

"I have," returned the Guerilla, "been doing a deed that will carry terror to every Frenchman, and make the usurper tremble, when the name of Juan Moreno is pronounced. But I am weary; give me some food, and when I rest for a few hours, if you will walk with me up the heights, I will relate my last adventure."

"Come," said the soldier; and leading the way, he introduced the weary Spaniard to the hut, struck a light, and placed before him the best cheer a scanty larder could produce.

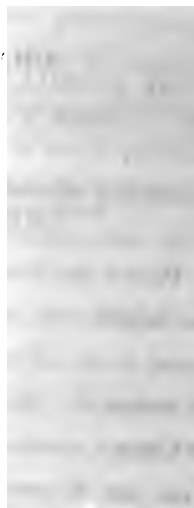
The Guerilla ate like one who had been for many hours fasting, finished a flask of wine, and then apologizing for keeping his host from his repose, stretched himself beside the soldier's bearskin, and, as if in the full consciousness of security, dropped into a sound sleep, which remained

unbroken until the reveillée disturbed the bivouac at daybreak.

One circumstance struck O'Connor as being remarkable. Wearied as the Guerilla was before he lay down on his cloak, he took a crucifix from his bosom, and repeated his prayers devoutly. A hand, red with recent murder, punctiliously let fall a bead at every *ave* ; and when his orisons were ended, he replaced the emblem of salvation, which he appeared to venerate so much, within the same breast where the knife, that had just despatched two unsuspecting victims, was deposited.

**THE GUERILLA BIVOUAC—ANECDOTES OF
THEIR WARFARE AND LEADERS.**

**OTHELLO.—O, that the slave had forty thousand lives,
One is too poor, too weak for my revenge!
SHAKSPEARE.**



CHAPTER VIII.

THE GUERILLA BIVOUAC.

WHEN the drum beat, Moreno started from his humble bed, and for a moment stared wildly round at the inmates of the hovel, who were all in motion at "the loud alarm" of the reveillée. O'Connor observed that even then his matins were not forgotten, and a hurried prayer was muttered ere he rose. Beckoning the soldier to follow, the Spaniard bowed courteously to all around, and then, wrapped in his mantillo, slowly proceeded towards the upper heights.

* After an hour's ascent, which to O'Connor was particularly tiresome, but to the Guerilla easy as if he journeyed on a plain, they stepped upon a plateau among the hills, which overlooked the English and French positions. To the soldier's astonishment, Moreno pointed out the stations of the enemy's corps with surprising accuracy, and named the commanders, and numerical force of each brigade. Once or twice he referred to a written document, taken from his pocket, which was evidently a French despatch. After a short halt, he rose from the rock he had been sitting on intimating it was time to continue his route.

The appearance of this formidable body was far more picturesque than military. They might have numbered one hundred, and all were armed and equipped according to individual fancy. Some were showily attired—others slovenly to a degree; and dresses of rich velvet were singularly contrasted with the coarser clothes worn by the peasantry of Andalusia. They looked more like a banditti than an organized band; but their horses were in excellent condition, and their arms of the best kind, and perfectly effective. The single word “my friend,” obtained for the visiter a rapturous welcome; and a brief description of their rencounter on the bridge, which O’Connor overheard repeated by the Guerilla, seemed to recommend him to the troop, as a fitting comrade for their bold and reckless leader.

There was in the whole system of Guerilla warfare a wild and romantic character, which, could its cruelty have been overlooked, would have rendered it both chivalrous and exciting. Men totally unfitted by previous habits and edu-

cation suddenly appeared upon the stage, and developed talent and determination that made them the scourge and terror of the invaders. But theirs was a combat of extermination—none of those courtesies, which render modern warfare endurable, were granted to their opponents—the deadliest hostility was unmitigated by success—and, when vanquished, expecting no quarter from the French, they never thought of extending it to those who unfortunately became their prisoners. A sanguinary struggle was raging; and *væ victis* seemed, with “war to the knife,” to be the only mottos of the Guerilla.

trayed the intelligence that reached him in his office—the fairest peasant of Estremadura would tempt the thoughtless soldier with her beauty, and decoy him within range of the bullet—and even childhood was frequently and successfully employed in leading the unsuspecting victim into some pass or ambuscade, where the knife or musket closed his earthly career.

In every community, however fierce and lawless, different gradations of good and evil will be discovered, and nothing could be more opposite than the feelings and actions of some of the Guerillas and their leaders. Many of these desperate bands were actuated in every enterprise by a love of bloodshed and spoliation, and their own countrymen suffered as heavily from their rapacity, as their enemies from their swords. Others took the field from nobler motives: an enthusiastic attachment to their country and religion roused them into vengeance against a tyranny which had become insufferable—every feeling but ardent patriotism was forgotten—private and dearer ties

were snapped asunder—homes, and wives, and children were abandoned—privations that appear almost incredible were patiently endured, until treachery delivered them to the executioner, or in some wild attempt they were overpowered by numbers, and died resisting to the last.

Dreadful as the retaliation was which French cruelty and oppression had provoked, the Guerilla vengeance against domestic treachery was neither less certain or less severe. To collect money or supplies for the invaders, convey any information, conceal their movements, and not betray them when opportunity occurred, was death to the

lector of Almagro, for professing attachment to the usurper, was stabbed by Urena to the heart; and a secret correspondence, between the wife of the Alcalde of Birhueda and the French general in the next command, having been detected by an intercepted despatch, the wretched woman, by order of Juan Martin Diez, the Empecinado, was dragged by a Guerilla party from her house, her hair shaven, her denuded person tarred and feathered and disgracefully exhibited in the public market-place—and she was then put to death amid the execrations of her tormentors. Nor was there any security for a traitor, even were his residence in the capital, or almost within the camp of the enemy. One of the favourites of Joseph Bonaparte, Don Jose Rigo, was torn from his home in the suburbs of Madrid, while celebrating his wedding, by the Empecinado, and hanged in the square of Cadiz. The usurper himself, on two occasions, narrowly escaped from this desperate partisan. Dining at Almeda, some two leagues distance from the capital, with one of the

generals of division, their hilarity was suddenly interrupted by the unwelcome intelligence that the Empecinado was at hand, and nothing but a hasty retreat preserved the pseudo king from capture. On another occasion, he was surprised upon the Guadalaxara road, and so rapid was the Guerilla movement, so determined their pursuit, that before the French could be succoured by the garrison of Madrid, forty of the royal escort were sabred between Torrejon and El Molar.

A war of extermination raged, and on both sides blood flowed in torrents. One act of cruelty was as promptly answered by another; and a

appeared—they were shot like dogs ; others were butchered in the towns, their bodies left rotting on the highways, and their heads exhibited on poles. That respect, which even the most depraved of men usually pay to female honour, was shamefully disregarded ; and more than one Spaniard, like the postmaster of Medina, was driven to the most desperate courses, by the violation of a wife and the murder of a child.

It would be sickening to describe the horrid scenes which mutual retaliation produced. Several of the Empecinado's followers, who were surprised in the mountains of Guadarama, were nailed to the trees, and left there to expire slowly by hunger and thirst. To the same trees, before a week elapsed, a similar number of French soldiers were affixed by the Guerillas. Two of the inhabitants of Madrid, who were suspected of communicating with the brigands, as the French termed the armed Spaniards, were tried by court-martial, and executed at their own door. The next morning six of the garrison were seen

hanging from walls beside the high road. Some females related to Palarea, surnamed the Medico, had been abused most scandalously by the escort of a convoy, who had seized them in a wood; and in return the Guerilla leader drove into an ermida eighty Frenchmen and their officers, set fire to the thatch, and burned them to death, or shot them in their endeavours to leave the blazing chapel. Such were the dreadful enormities a system of retaliation caused.

These desperate adventurers were commanded by men of the most dissimilar professions. All were distinguished by some *sobriquet*, and these

Martina. So indiscriminating and unrelenting was this female monster in her murder of friends and foes, that Mina was obliged to direct his force against her. She was surprised, with the greater portion of her banditti, and the whole were shot upon the spot.

Of all the Guerilla leaders the two Minas were the most remarkable for their daring, their talents, and their successes. The younger, Xavier, had a short career, but nothing could be more chivalrous and romantic than many of the incidents that marked it. His band amounted to a thousand, and with this force he kept Navarre, Biscay, and Aragon, in confusion; intercepted convoys, levied contributions, plundered the custom-houses, and harassed the enemy incessantly. The villages were obliged to furnish rations for his troops, and the French convoys supplied him with money and ammunition. His escapes were often marvellous. He swam flooded rivers deemed impassable, and climbed precipices hitherto untraversed by a human foot. Near Estella he was

forced by numbers to take refuge on a lofty rock ; the only accessible side he defended till night-fall, when lowering himself and followers by a rope, he brought his party off with scarcely the loss of a man.

This was among his last exploits ; for when reconnoitring by moonlight, in the hope of capturing a valuable convoy, he fell unexpectedly into the hands of an enemy's patrol. Proscribed by the French as a bandit, it was surprising that his life was spared ; but his loss to the Guerrillas was regarded as a great misfortune.

While disputing as to the choice of a leader.

cessor, but when he assumed the command, his firm and daring character was rapidly developed. Echeverria, with a strong following, had started as a rival chief; but Mina surprised him—had three of his subordinates shot with their leader—and united the remainder of the band with his own. Although he narrowly escaped from becoming a victim to the treachery of a comrade, the prompt and severe justice with which he visited the offender, effectually restrained other adventurers from making any similar attempt.

The traitor was a sergeant of his own, who, from the bad expression of his face, had received among his companions the *sobriquet* of Malcarrado. Discontented with the new commander, he determined to betray him to the enemy, and concerted measures with Pannetia, whose brigade was near the village of Robres, to surprise the Guerilla chieftain in his bed. Partial success attended the treacherous attempt; but Mina defended himself desperately with the bar of the door, and kept the French at bay till Gastra, his

chosen comrade, assisted him to escape. The Guerilla rallied his followers, repulsed the enemy, took Malcarado, and shot him instantly, while the village curé and three alcaides implicated in the traitorous design, were hanged side by side upon a tree, and their houses razed to the ground.

An example of severity like this gave confidence to his own followers, and exacted submission from the peasantry. Every where Mina had a faithful spy—every movement of the enemy was reported—and if a village magistrate received a requisition from a French commandant, it was communicated to the Guerilla chief with due

supply; and for days he would exist upon a few biscuits, or any thing which chance threw in his road. He guarded carefully against surprise—slept with a dagger and pistols in his girdle—and such were his active habits, that he rarely took more than two hours of repose. The mountain caverns were the depositories of his ammunition and plunder; and in a mountain fastness he established an hospital for his wounded, to which they were carried in litters across the heights, and placed in perfect safety, until their cure could be completed. Gaming and plunder were prohibited, and even love forbidden, lest the Guerilla might be too communicative to the object of his affection, and any of his chieftain's secrets should transpire.

Of the minor chiefs many strange and chivalrous adventures are on record. The daring plans, often tried and generally successful, and the hair-breadth escapes of several, are almost beyond belief. No means, however repugnant to the laws of modern warfare, were unemployed; while

the ingenuity with which intelligence of a hostile movement was transmitted—the artifice with which an enemy was delayed, until he could be surrounded or surprised, appear incredible. Of individual ferocity a few instances will be sufficient. At the execution of an alcalde and his son at Mondragon, the old man boasted that two hundred French had perished by their hands; and the Chaleco, Francis Moreno, in a record of his services, boasts of his having waited for a cavalry patrol in a ravine, and, by the discharge of a huge blunderbuss loaded nearly to the muzzle, dislocated his own shoulder, and killed

to be a functionary of the junta, made Ladrada a scene of bloodshed. By night his victims were despatched; and to the disgrace of woman, his wife was more sanguinary than himself. Castanos at length arrested their blood-stained career; and Pedrasuela was hanged and beheaded, and Maria, his infamous confederate, garotted.

Castile was overrun by banditti; and one gang, destroyed by a Guerilla chief named Juan Abril, had accumulated plunder, principally in specie, amounting in value to half a million reales. One of the band, when captured by the French, to save his life discovered the secret, and offered to lead a party to the place where the treasure was deposited. His proposal was accepted. An alguazil, with an escort of cavalry, proceeded to the wood of Villa Viciosa, and there booty was found worth more than the value affixed to it by the deserter. Returning in unsuspecting confidence, the party were drawn into an ambushade by the Medico, who had been acquainted with the expedition; and of the escort

and officials, with the exception of five who managed to escape, every one was butchered without mercy.

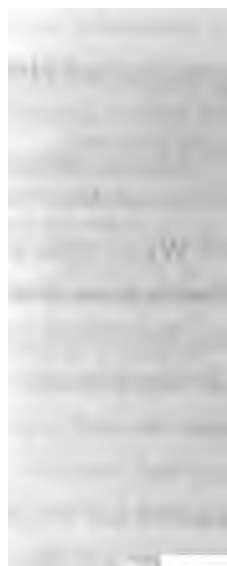
Such were the wild and relentless foes to whom the invaders were exposed—such were the Spaniards, who had made themselves remarkable for patriotism and endurance—surpassing courage and unmitigated cruelty. In those around him O'Connor looked upon men who, through the whole Peninsular struggle, had carried terror with their names, and in the leader, who was standing beside him apart from the band, he recognised a chieftain in whose breast if report were true

EL MANCO—A GUERRILLA BREAKFAST.

2d MURDERER. I'm one, my liege,
Whom the vile blows and buffets of the world
Have so incens'd, that I am reckless what
I do, to spite the world.

1st MURDERER. And I another,
So weary with disasters, tugg'd with fortune,
That I would set my life on any chance,
To mend it, or be rid on't.

SHAKESPEARE.



CHAPTER IX.

A GUERILLA BREAKFAST.

“WHAT think you of my band?” said the Guerilla leader to Major O’Connor, as he observed the soldier’s eye examining the formidable troop, who were preparing their breakfast in the valley below the rock to which Moreno and his companion had removed. “Compared with your own beautiful and efficient regiment, what a wretched rabble my wild followers must appear!”

“Far from it, my friend,” replied the soldier. “Their clothing and appointments are certainly irregular, and one who looked to dresses, and not the men who wore them, might hold your band

in slight estimation. Your followers appear active and determined soldiers, and some of them the finest fellows I have ever seen."

The Guerilla seemed pleased with the approbation his troop received from O'Connor.

"And yet," he said, "the youngest and the most powerful are not those who have shed most blood, or wreaked the deepest vengeance on our common enemy. The weakest arm is sometimes united to the strongest heart; and while our morning meal is in preparation, I will point out to you the most remarkable among my com-

not the oppressors crossed these mountains, they would have worn their lives away in their native valleys, as peaceful vinedressers or contented artisans. Mark you that old man leaning against a rock?"

"I do," returned the soldier. "The grey hair and diminutive person would lead one to reckon him the least formidable of your companions."

The chief smiled.

"Is there any thing beside, which strikes you in him as remarkable?"

"I observe," returned the soldier, "that he is provided with a musket of unusual length."

"And," continued the Guerilla, "one arm is lame, from whence he has obtained the surname of El Manco. Many an enemy has perished by that old man's hand—many a French heart the bullets from that gun have searched."

"Indeed?"

"Yes," said the chief. "El Manco was wantonly injured, but he was as desperately avenged. There was not a more peaceable peasant in Castile. He occupied the cottage where his parents

had lived and died, and laboured in the same farm which his forefathers had tilled for centuries. His home was in a sequestered valley among the hills, and its remoteness might have been expected to secure the humble owner from the insults of an invader. But no—where is the wood or dell so retired, that it has escaped the cruelty and rapacity of the oppressors?

“Late one evening a small party of French dragoons appeared unexpectedly among the mountains; and the secluded valley where El Manco dwelt was soon discovered by these marauders.

They approached the old man's cottage, were

her former beauty; and his daughters, only verging upon womanhood, were singularly handsome. Morning had just dawned—the order to march was given, and the unhappy family supposing that, pleased with the civility they had experienced through the night, the marauders would take a friendly leave, came forward to say farewell. Half the party mounted, when, on a signal from their officer, a dozen ruffians seized on the peasant's daughters, and placed them before two dragoons. In vain the astonished mother clung wildly to one of her beloved ones—in vain the father rushed upon the horseman who held the other. He was maimed for life by a sword-cut, and his wife was savagely shot by the horseman, from whose ruffian grasp she had striven to extricate her child. Wounded and bewildered, El Manco leaned over the dying woman. In a few minutes she breathed her last, and her groans mingled with her daughters' shrieks, as they came at intervals from the moun-

tains, over which the ravishers were carrying them.

“For three months El Manco remained an idiot, and during that time no tidings of his children could be obtained. At length they returned to their once happy and innocent home;—one only to die, the other to exist dishonoured. The story of their wrongs seemed to rouse their wretched father—memory came back—he swore eternal, implacable revenge, and quitted his native valley for ever. His only arms were the gun you see, and the knife he carries in his bosom. Bred a hunter in his youth, he was an excellent marks-

parties were constantly sent out to apprehend the dreaded brigand. Frequently they found El Manco in the forest, to all appearance peaceably employed in cutting wood; and deceived by his age, the simplicity of his answers, and his feebleness, they were contented with seeking information, to enable them to apprehend the criminal. Accident at last betrayed El Manco's secret; but before the discovery was made, more than sixty Frenchmen had fallen by the hand of that maimed and powerless being. Of course, he was obliged to fly, and since that time he has attached himself to the party I command."

"It is a strange tale, certainly," said the soldier; "and to look at El Manco, none could suppose him to be capable of such desperate retaliation."

"It shows," replied the Spaniard, "that the humblest individual, when wantonly abused, has means sufficient for revenge, if he has only courage to make the essay. Did you know the private histories of this band, half the number of

those who fill my ranks have been forced there by injury and oppression. War drove them from more peaceful vocations, and want obliged them to adopt a course of life, for which, under other circumstances, they had neither inclination nor ability. When the noble refused to submit to the thrall of a foreign despot, and was beggared by the spoliations of the tyrant's minions, those who depended on him as retainers shared in the ruin of their protector. The hidalgo was driven from his hereditary estate, the farmer had his crops cut down, and his vineyard and olive-ground devastated. The labourer lacked his

tion of rank—from the ruined noble to the bankrupt tradesman.—But here comes breakfast. Last night, major, you and I were like enough to prove the temper of the knife —this morning we'll employ it for friendlier purposes."

The Guerilla's meal was a strange melange. There was broiled mutton, an English ham, a flask of superior wine, French biscuits, rye bread, and two or three nameless culinary preparations. Every thing was served in plate; and dish, cup, and spoon were all of massive silver. The Spaniard smiled at O'Connor's astonishment.

" You see how we mountain soldiers live. England and France, Italy and Spain, have furnished materials for our breakfast; and these silver vessels, but a short time since, were ranged upon a royal sideboard. In truth, my friend, we are indebted for them all to El Rey Jose. I picked up a part of the baggage at Vittoria, and we have made free with viands provided for the usurper, but which the chance of war gave to

honest men—you and me. Drink—that wine is excellent. An hour hence we march; and if you please it, to fill up the interval, I will tell you some adventures of my own.”

CONFESIONS OF A GUERRILLA.

Vengeance, deep brooding o'er the slain,
Had locked the source of softer wo ;
And burning pride, and high disdain,
Forbade the rising tear to flow.

Lay of the Last Minstrel.

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CHAPTER X



CONFESSIONS OF A GUERRILLA.

I AM the youngest son of an old soldier. My mother died while I was an infant; and my father, after serving in the Royal Guard for thirty years, quitted the corps from ill health—retired to his native village—and, on his pension and paternal estate, lived hospitably, until, at a good old age, he slipped away calmly from the world, respected and regretted by all who knew him.

There were twenty years between Vicente, my elder brother, and myself. At our father's death he was a man, and I but a schoolboy. Although left an orphan, I had no destitution to complain

of; Vicente was the best of brothers—he treated me with parental tenderness—watched over my education—directed my studies—and, when I arrived at that time of life when a profession should be selected, he procured for me an appointment in the capital, and allotted me a liberal portion of his income, to enable me to maintain myself as a gentleman, until, by the routine of office, I should obtain some more lucrative post. Never was a man less adapted by nature for a life of rapine and bloodshed than I. My disposition was quiet and contemplative—books were my

chief delight. I read much, and not contented

The director of the office, to which I was attached, was a man of noble descent and amiable character. He was called Don Jose Miranda. His place was very lucrative; and as he had a small estate, and was a widower with but one child, it was believed that the young Catalina would inherit, at her father's death, a very considerable fortune.

The director appeared partial to me from the beginning—took pains in teaching me the duties of the office—showed me every civility in his power—and frequently brought me to his house, a villa, pleasantly situated at about a league's distance from the city. There I passed many a happy hour—for there I first became acquainted with Catalina.

I saw and loved her. You, a soldier from boyhood, who, haply, know the passion but by name, would smile at the weakness I must confess, did I own the ardour, the devotion, with which my heart worshipped the director's daughter. Who could look on Catalina and remain un-

moved? She was then scarcely sixteen, and just springing into womanhood, with all the charms that render beauty irresistible. Then I was different from what I now am—care had not settled on my brow—this hand was unstained with blood—this heart was not wrung by injury and insult—this bosom was not burning with revenge. Then no anxieties disturbed it; and all it throbbed for was the object of its love—the young, the peerless Catalina.

I did not sue in vain. My mistress listened to my declaration of attachment with evident plea-

sure—and I was accepted. The dinner when

made the necessary communication. He heard me, and objected only to the want of a sufficient fortune on my part; but, at the same time, he proposed to remedy that evil. He was becoming old—the state of political affairs was more than threatening—a national convulsion was at hand—he wished to retire from official labour—and, he said, that he would signify his intention to the government, and obtain the appointment for me.

It was done. His application was favourably received—and it was duly intimated by the minister of finance that I should be Don Jose's successor. All objection to my union with Catalina was removed, and the day was named on which she was to become my wife.

The revolution broke out suddenly—events were hurried to a rapid crisis—the French occupied Madrid—and every department of the executive was thrown into confusion. In all the state offices persons suspected of attachment to their lawful king, became obnoxious to the usurper; they were unceremoniously discarded,

and the minions of the invader substituted in their stead. I had no fancy for political intrigues, consequently I had never been a partisan, and it might have been supposed that I should have escaped the wrath of the despot; but, before I suspected danger, an event occurred which overturned all my hopes, and rendered me for ever a wretched and a ruined man.

Driven to madness by foreign oppression, the peasantry of Andalusia had broken into insurrection, and declared deadly hostility to the invaders. Valdenebro appeared at their head—while my brother Vicente joined the mountaineers of

Catalina—my arm was around her waist, her head was resting on my bosom, and her dark and sparkling eyes turned upon mine, as, in playful raillery, she taxed me with some fanciful offence. A bustle without, a tramping of feet and ringing of spurs, was heard along the paved corridor. Presently the door was thrown open, and a French officer of dragoons strode haughtily across the chamber, while his orderly remained standing in the doorway. I sprang up, placed myself between Catalina and the intruder, and demanded his name and business. He smiled ironically.

“ I am called Henri de Blondville,” he said, “ a captain of hussars; and you, if I am not misinformed, are Don Juan Moreno.”

“ I am Juan Moreno,” I replied.

“ Then I must interrupt your *tête-à-tête*, my friend. Here, Pierre—here is your prisoner.” Half-a-dozen hussars instantly came in. I remonstrated, but it was unavailing, and demanded to know the nature of my offence, and the authority by which I was treated like a malefactor.

“This is my warrant,” replied the Frenchman, as he scornfully touched the handle of his sabre. “Secure the gentleman,” he continued, addressing his myrmidons. I was instantly seized—handcuffed like a deserter—torn from the house, and not permitted to await the recovery of Catalina, who had fainted on the sofa, nor allowed to bid my affianced wife farewell.

I was mounted on a dragoon horse, escorted by a troop of cavalry, and not permitted to procure a cloak or a change of linen. Transferred from troop to troop, without rest, without food, until I was completely worn down with suffering

sufficient to sustain life. My bodily sufferings were severe enough, but what were they compared to the mental agony I endured, when my deserted bride and her helpless parent were remembered. My offences, whatever they might be, would probably be visited on them; and when I thought of the licentious character of the invaders, I shuddered to think that Catalina was so beautiful and so unprotected.

The thirtieth night of my melancholy captivity arrived, and the hour of the jailer's visit was at hand. I heard a sudden uproar in the prison, and, even remote as my dungeon was, the shouts of men, and the sharp discharge of small arms, reached it. The affray was short as it had been sudden—the noises died away—the conflict was over, or the combatants were engaged at a greater distance from my cell. It was a strange and unusual event, and I longed for the appearance of the keeper, to ask him what had caused this midnight tumult.

At last the key grated in the dungeon lock, and my jailer entered. He looked like a person who had been engaged in a recent affray; and to judge from his torn clothes, and head bound up in a bloody handkerchief, he had suffered in the scuffle. When I asked what had occasioned the late confusion, he regarded me with a ferocious stare—left the loaf and pitcher down—and, as he turned to the door, muttered, “I suspect, my friend, that *you* will know more about it in the morning!” and abruptly quitting the cell, left me to solitude and darkness.

Day broke, and I waited impatiently to learn

General Sebastiani, attended by a numerous staff and a few civilians, was sitting in judgment on a prisoner.

That he was one was evident enough, for I remarked that both his hands and feet were strongly fettered. His back was turned to me as he confronted his judge; but from his hat and mantillo, I guessed him to be a Spaniard. The hall was encircled by a triple file of soldiers, and a deathlike silence ensued, as the French general ceased speaking on my entrance with the guard.

“Approach, young man,” he said, after a minute’s pause.

I did as I was ordered, and came forward to the table where my fellow-captive stood.

“Look up,” continued the Frenchman, “and tell me if you know the prisoner?”

The captive remained regarding steadily the person on whose decision his fate rested. I raised my eyes to examine his face. Great God!—it was no strange countenance that met my glance—the prisoner was my brother!

“Vicente!” I exclaimed. He started at the well-known voice, and next moment we were in each other’s arms. Gently disengaging himself from my embrace, he held me at a little distance as he mournfully replied—

“And is this wreck of manhood thou, my beloved brother? Alas, Juan—thy free spirit agrees but poorly with a tyrant’s thrall. I need not ask how thou hast fared; that withered cheek and sunken eye tell plainly enough how well chains and captivity can work the wrath of the oppressor. I heard but two days since of thy arrest; and I would have delivered thee, but for

but a traitor had betrayed him, and his own capture and certain death resulted.

Sebastiani and his staff watched our interview with marked attention. He whispered to an aide-de-camp, who withdrew from the hall, and the general then addressed himself to me.

“Juan Moreno,” he said, “attend and answer me.”

I bowed, and the general proceeded.

“You are accused, that, contrary to the royal decree, condemning to death all Spaniards taken in arms, and all who abet and assist them—you have been in communication with the brigands in the mountains of Ronda, and that, through information sent from the capital by you, much of the mischief they have perpetrated has been caused. How say ye—are these charges true—and are you guilty of this treason?”

Before I could reply, my brother addressed Sebastiani.

“General,” he said, “you have offered me liberty and preferment, and I have refused them,

because I could only accept them with the loss of honour. Judge whether, to free another, I would do that, which, even to save myself, I have declined doing. Think not that I am reckless of life. No—there are ties which bind me to it ardently. I am a husband—and I am a father. Now by the hope of Heaven, which must enable me with firmness to go through the scene that is approaching—by the unsullied honour of a Spaniard, Juan Moreno is guiltless of the charge you have accused him of.”

There was a pause—and the solemnity of my brother's declaration seemed to confirm my inno-

the fact, that a treasonable correspondence existed between Vicente and me.

Moreno darted a withering look at the betrayer of his country.

“What!” he exclaimed. “Mind ye the assertions of yon pale-faced traitor?—A miscreant false to his nation and his God! One, who like the arch-deceiver of old, has sold for silver the blood of innocence so frequently. Would the denunciations of such a wretch be deemed worthy of belief by any man of honour. But I am wrong to permit an abject traitor to disturb any portion of the brief space of life that now remains.”

“Moreno!”—said Sebastiani.—“You have two lives at your disposal. Save your brother’s and your own. Accept my offers, or you know the alternative.”

“I know it, general; and I have made my decision from the moment I became your prisoner.”

“Pause”—said the Frenchman. “Remem-

ber, no hope but one remains. Your band cannot save—"

"But," said the Guerilla with a smile, "they can avenge me! I have a last request. Allow me a confessor, and a few minutes of private conversation with my brother."

"Both are granted. I have already despatched my aide-de-camp to his convent for the priest you named, and you may retire into the adjoining room with your brother until the monk arrives."

"I thank you, general, for this indulgence; nay, I feel convinced that in your own heart you

I have thee; and, brief as my span of existence is, I would use it in preparing thee for death or life. If thou art to be another victim, bear thy doom manfully, and prove upon the scaffold how calmly a Spaniard can abide the tyrant's decree. If thou art spared, devote thyself to avenge thy country's wrongs—thy brother's slaughter. Now tax thy energies, for I have evil news to tell. Canst thou bear of ruined hopes?—of—”

“What!”—I exclaimed, as he hesitated.—
 “What of Catalina? Have they wronged her?—
 Have they—.”

“Patience, my brother, and man thyself—
 none can wrong—.”

He stopped again.

“Go on, Vicente. Go on. All this is torture.”

“The dead,”—he added solemnly.

“The dead!—Is Catalina dead?”

“She is,” he returned. “Ten days after you had been torn away, while thy betrothed was lying in a fever, they seized the old man, and

incarcerated him. The shock was fatal. She became delirious, and expired on the third day, without the consolation of knowing that a lover watched her couch, or a parent closed her eyes. Jose Miranda heard the tidings—he never raised his head afterwards, and in a week they laid him in the same cemetery where Catalina rests.”

“God of justice!” I exclaimed, “can such villany and oppression escape unpunished?”

“Thou mayst yet have vengeance in thy power; and the last efforts of my life shall be used to save thine. Should I succeed, remember Vicente and avenge him. Here comes the

nobly he submitted to his martyrdom—thou know'st already.

The fading sunbeams penetrated the grated loophole of my dungeon—and it was resolved that I should never see them set again. Moreno's firmness on the scaffold had incensed the bloodhounds who had sent him there, while the deep sympathy exhibited by the spectators alarmed and exasperated Civia and Fernandez, his renegade confederate, and the betrayer of my brother. They urged on Sebastiani the expediency of example, and exhorted him to check this popular display of pity and admiration. The French general yielded a reluctant consent, and the warrant for my execution next morning was officially prepared.

It was an unusual hour for a visit, when I heard the keeper turn his key. He came accompanied by a monk, and showed me the fatal warrant. The death of my affianced bride—the murder of my gallant brother—the total wreck of worldly happiness had rendered life so valueless,

that, but for the hope of revenge, I would have parted with existence, and felt that death was a relief.

“ Art thou prepared to die, my son?” said the friar, after the jailer had read the fatal mandate.

“ Better I trust, father, than they who are spillers of innocent blood.”

“ Art thou ready,” continued the monk, “ to submit to thy fate with resignation; and, like a Christian man, forgive thy enemies and persecutors?”

“ I will meet my doom like a man,” I replied, “ and my last exhortation to those who witness

Before the sound of the keeper's steps was lost in the distant passage, the monk suddenly flung back his cowl, and displayed a dark and vindictive countenance.

"Juan Moreno, it is no shaveling who speaks to thee, but a devoted comrade of thy brother. I have planned thy escape: hear and attend to what I say. At the end of the stone corridor without the door there is a window that opens on the market-place. It is, to all appearance, strongly secured with iron stanchions; but several of the bars have been sawed through; and could you but quit this cell, the rest were easy. There is but one way—it is simple and sure—when the keeper comes here at midnight stab him to the heart, and hasten to the outlet I have described. There I, with some trusty companions, will be waiting. Whistle twice, and we will know thou art at the grate. Take these, and hide them until they are wanted;" and he gave me a dagger, a pistol, some food, and a flask of wine.

"Drink," he said, "and when the time comes

for action, think of Vicente Moreno, remember thy martyred brother, and strike home to the heart of one of his murderers. But I must free thee from thy fetters ;” and stooping, he unlocked the chains, told me his plans again, and exhorted me to be prompt and resolute. I needed nothing to rouse my vengeance ; and, hiding the weapons and the wine beneath the mattress, waited the jailer’s coming, whose steps were heard advancing along the vaulted passage.

“ Well,” he said, “ holy father, hast thou made any progress in fitting this youth for death?”

“Now, by St. Jerome,” exclaimed the keeper, “I will witness thy dying pangs upon the gallows, with as much pleasure as I looked upon those of the rebel whom you speak of. Come, holy father, leave the young brigand to himself, and let him amuse himself with the prospect of a hempen necklace until to-night, when I will bring him the last loaf he will require at my hands.”

He said—followed the disguised Guerilla, and I was left once more in solitude and darkness.

Had I felt one sting of compunction in robbing a human being of life so suddenly, the remarks of the truculent scoundrel, in allusion to my brother’s death, would have removed it. I ate the food, drank the wine sparingly, concealed the weapons in my bosom, and coolly waited for the hour when the work of vengeance should commence.

Midnight came—the deep-toned bell of Santa Margarita told the hour, and sounded the knell of my first victim. Pedro entered the cell as he usually did; and when he had laid down the

loaf and pitcher, informed me that one hour after daybreak, I should be required to be ready.

"You, I presume, intend to witness the ceremony," I said carelessly.

"I would not take a doubloon, and miss the sight," he replied. "Youngster, you have already cost me a broken head"—and he pointed to his bandages. "In his mad attempt to save you, I received this blow from Vicente Moreno."

"And this from Juan"—I added—striking the dagger to the hilt in his bosom. Thrice I repeated the blow as he was falling. The jailer gave one hollow groan, and all was over.

my execution, when I was expected to exhibit on the scaffold, I was kneeling in the mountains of Ronda, in the centre of a guerilla troop, swearing upon my brother's crucifix, eternal vengeance against his murderers.

But I have been tedious in my narrative, and it is time my hand were moving. I shall give the word of readiness; and while my comrades are bridling their horses, I will tell you my last adventure.

I mentioned the names of Ciria and Fernandez, as the villains who had betrayed my brother, and consigned me to the dungeons of Grenada. Before three months passed I surprised the former in Almagro, and hanged him over his own door. Fernandez, aware that the same fate awaited him, retired to France, and thus evaded for a time my vengeance. His treachery was rewarded with an appointment in the enemy's commissariat; and, as his duties lay beyond the Pyrenees, he fancied himself secure.

Four days ago I found, by an intercepted despatch, that the traitor was quartered within the French lines, and expected another villain, named Cardonna, to meet him on some secret business at the village of Espalette. A pass from General Foy was enclosed, to enable the latter to clear the outposts. There was a chance—a dangerous one no doubt—but the dead called for vengeance, and I resolved to obtain it, or perish in the attempt. I left my band in their mountain bivouacs, passed the French sentries unmolested, and at nightfall entered the village.

To find out without exciting any inquiries

andez. "Hasten back, that the business may be settled before Cardonna arrives."

"I shall be back in ten minutes," replied the other, as he rose and left the room.

I waited for half that time, then passed into the cottage unobserved, and entered the chamber boldly. Fernandez continued writing at the table—his back was to the door; and never doubting but it was his friend returning with the roll, he never raised his eyes from the returns. I marked the spot to strike, and with one blow divided the spine. The head dropped down upon the table, and not a sigh escaped his lips! With the point of my bloody knife I traced upon a slip of paper the name of "Juan Moreno," and glided from the cottage unquestioned and unnoticed. Was not that, my friend, brave revenge? To immolate, in the centre of an enemy's camp, the murderer of Vicente—the destroyer of Catalina.

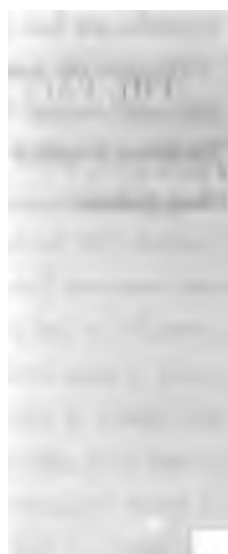
My subsequent escape was truly hazardous. I hid myself during the day in a hollow bank that


overhung the river, and at night succeeded in reaching the bridge—the termination you know yourself.

And now you have heard from my own lips the causes which have made my name so formidable to the invaders. Had I not been driven to the mountains by oppression, I should have dreamed my life peacefully away—and Juan Moreno would have lived, and died, and been forgotten. Cruelty turned my blood to gall, and changed my very nature. At manhood this hand was stainless as a schoolboy's—at thirty the blood of fifty victims reeks upon it. Human joys and pleasures are

shall be "war to the knife!"—and when I die, whether it be on the scaffold or the field, my last breath shall be a curse upon the oppressor. Ho, Carlos! my horse. And now farewell. You and I shall probably never meet again. May you be happy; and when you hear that Juan Moreno is no more, ask how he died."

He gave the word to march—sprang lightly to the saddle—and, at the sudden turning of an alpine pass, waved a last adieu to O'Connor, and disappeared.





THE FALL OF ST. SEBASTIAN.

The tale of war still bears a painful sound—
I see in captured towns but mangled corpses—
I hear in victory's shouts but dying groans.

M. G. LEWIS.

CHAPTER XI.

THE FALL OF ST. SEBASTIAN.

WHEN Soult retreated through the passes of the Pyrenees by Maya, Roncesvalles, and Echalan, the British and their allies resumed the positions from which they had been forced, and re-established their head-quarters at Lezaca. A period of comparative inactivity succeeded. Immediate operations could not be commenced on either side — the enemy had been too severely repulsed to permit their becoming assailants again; while, on the other hand, Wellington would not be justified in crossing the frontier and entering a hostile country, with Pamplona and

St. Sebastian garrisoned by the French, and in his rear.

Nothing could be more magnificent than the positions of the British brigades. For many a mile along the extended line of occupation, huts crowning the heights or studding the deep valleys below them, showed the rude dwellings of the mighty mass of human beings collected in that alpine country. At night the scene was still more picturesque. The irregular surface of the sierras sparkled with a thousand watch-fires, and the bivouacs of the allies exhibited all the varieties of light and shadow which an artist loves to

heights towered in majestic grandeur to the skies, and stretched into distance beyond the range of sight.

That portion of the Rifles with which our story chiefly lies, had resumed their old quarters at the bridge, and occupied the same bivouac, from which Soult's advance had obliged them to retire. Although no military movements were made, this inactive interval of a vigorous campaign was usefully employed by the allied commander, in organizing anew the regiments that had suffered most, concentrating the divisions, replacing exhausted stores, and perfecting the whole materiel of the army. Those of the British near the coast, compared with the corps that were blockading Pamplona, lived comfortably in their mountain bivouacs. The task of covering the blockade was the most disagreeable that falls to the soldier's lot. Exposed to cold and rain, continually on the alert, and yet engaged in a duty devoid of enterprise and interest, nothing could be more wearying to the troops employed, and

244 THE FALL OF ST. SEBASTIAN.

desertions, which during active service were frequent, became numerous, and especially among the Spaniards and Irish.

It was a wet day,—a thick mist hung over the valleys, and shut out distant objects from the view of the light troops cantoned on the heights of Santa Barbara. The wooden hut was but thinly tenanted—for, alas! several of the brave youths who had been formerly its occupants, had found a soldier's grave during the late combats in the mountains, or fallen before the shattered bastions of Saint Sebastian. Although not engaged in the investment of that fortress,

ingenuity was tried by the French governor—and the failure of the first assault, and the subsequent raising of the siege, imboldened the garrison and rendered them the more confident of holding out, until Soult could advance and succour them. The time from which the battering guns had been withdrawn, until they were again replaced in the works, had been assiduously employed in constructing new defences and strengthening the old ones. But though the place when reinvested was more formidable than before, the besiegers appeared only the more determined to reduce it—Santa Clara, a bluff and rocky island commanding the landing place, was carried after an obstinate defence—a mortar battery was erected to shell the castle from across the bay—while a storm of round and case shot was maintained so vigorously, that in a short time the fire of the enemy was nearly silenced.

The night before the storm was well fitted to harbinger the day of slaughter that succeeded,—a dreadful tempest of thunder, lightning and

rain came on with darkness, and amid the uproar of elemental fury; three mines loaded with 1500 lbs. of powder were sprung by the besiegers, and the sea-wall blown down.

Morning broke gloomily—an intense mist obscured every object—and the work of slaughter was for a time delayed. At nine the sea-breeze cleared away the fog—the sun shone gloriously out—and in two hours the forlorn hope issued from the trenches. The columns succeeded, and every gun from the fortress that could bear, opened on them with shot and shells. The appearance of the breach was perfectly delusive—nothing living

the approaches with their guns. To survive this concentrated fire was impossible; the forlorn hope were cut off to a man, and the heads of the columns annihilated. At last the debouches were choked with the dead and wounded, and a further passage to the breach rendered impracticable, from the heap of corpses that were piled upon each other.

Then, in that desperate moment, when hope might have been supposed to be over, an expedient unparalleled in the records of war was resorted to. The British batteries opened on the curtain, and the storming parties heard with surprise the roar of cannon in their rear, while, but a few feet above their heads, the iron shower hissed horribly, sweeping away the enemy and their defences. This was the moment for a fresh effort. Another brigade was moved forward, and favoured by an accidental explosion upon the curtain, which confused the enemy while it encouraged the assailants, the *terre-plain* was mounted, and the French driven from the works.

A long and obstinate resistance was continued in the streets, which were in many places barricaded, but by five in the evening opposition ceased—and the town was in the possession of the British.

A night of frightful excesses followed the capture of the city. Plunder and violence were raging through every corner of the place—the town was partially on fire—while, as if to add to the horror of the scene, the elements were convulsed, and it thundered and lightened awfully. Over the transactions of that night a veil should be drawn—for if ever men were demonized, these were the captors of St. Sebastian.

was never correctly known, but nearly a thousand perished in forcing the bridge at Vera, which was held by a part of the light division.

An animated description of the fall of St. Sebastian, by a survivor of those who volunteered from the rifles, had occasioned some observations on the advantage of night attacks. O'Connor had been frequently appealed to upon disputed points. Gradually a deeper interest to learn the particulars of the assault on Badajoz was excited, and none could better describe that scene of blood than he who had led the storming party. The rain continued falling with unabated violence, and all the inmates of the wooden hut were collected round the rough bench which formed the table. To their unanimous request the gallant soldier yielded a goodhumoured assent, and thus narrated that glorious affair, which widowed many a dame, and left many a maid "lamenting."

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THE STORM OF BADAJOZ.

From the point of encountering blades to the hilt,
Sabres and swords with blood were gilt ;
But the rampart is won, and the spoil begun,
And all but the after-carnage done.

SIEGE OF CORINTH.

Men, like wild beasts, when once they have tasted
blood, acquire an appetite for it.

SOUTHEY.

And he had learned to love—I know not why,
For this in such as him seems strange of mood—
The helpless looks of blooming infancy
Even in its earliest nature.

CHILDE HAROLD.

CHAPTER XII.

THE STORM OF BADAJOZ.

“BADAJOZ!” exclaimed O’Connor, with enthusiasm, “many a gallant deed—many a bitter recollection are associated with thee. Thousands of the best troops that England and France ever sent into the field are mouldering before thy bastions—and many a widowed wife and fatherless child will curse the name that recalls the loss of their protectors!”

Never shall I forget the morning of the 9th of March, when the light, third, and fourth divisions crossed the Tagus by a bridge of boats, and concentrating a Elvas, pushed on to Merida and

Lerena. Never was an army in higher spirit—and all were anxious to come in contact with the enemy. On the 16th Badajoz was to be invested. The pontoon bridge was thrown across the Guadiana; and, though fiercely opposed by the French cavalry, the river was crossed, and we sat down before this celebrated fortress.

Badajoz is easily described. Round one portion of the town the rivulets Calamon and Rivelas sweep, and unite with the Guadiana, which flows in the face of the works, and in front of the heights of Saint Christoval. The castle stands nearly above the union of these rivers. The

in reconnoitring the place, and determining the point on which our opening assault should be directed. The outwork of Picarina was selected for the first essay ; and in a tempest of wind and rain and favoured by the darkness, we broke ground within a hundred and forty paces of the fort. Three thousand men laboured throughout the night without a moment's cessation—and at dawn the garrison were astounded to see the first parallel completed.

All the next day, under a lively cannonade from the fort and town, we laboured vigorously. At night the rain came down in torrents, but we worked on, knee-deep in water. On the 19th the trenches were advancing rapidly, and some guns were already in battery—when Phillipon, alarmed for the safety of his best outwork, determined to sally, and attempt the destruction of our labours.

During the morning an unusual bustle was apparent in the city and fort ; but the soldiers, up to the waist in water, continued pushing on the works. At noon, profiting by a dense fog,

the sallyports of the fortress were thrown open, and eighteen hundred of the enemy rushed on us with fixed bayonets. A short and sanguinary struggle ensued. On the left, the French were driven back to their own gates; and though they surprised the workmen on the right, and injured a part of the trenches, the sortie was on the whole disastrous to the garrison, and cost them above four hundred killed or prisoners. We lost a number of officers and men; but the French gained nothing by the affair but a few intrenching tools. They carried off a number of spades

as badly off for food and shelter as might be. But we laboured on—the weather changed—the 24th was fine. The French attempted to check our efforts to place guns in battery and establish magazines, by an increased storm of artillery. Our men fell in dozens—the engineers, who directed the works, and exposed themselves with reckless devotion, were momentarily shot down—shells dropped frequently into the trenches—powder casks were repeatedly exploded while being conveyed to the magazine. Under all these discouraging circumstances, the works were completed; and, on the dawning of the 25th, two batteries were unmasked, and opened with a tremendous fire on the outwork of Picurina at the short distance of one hundred and forty paces. Of course the town and fort turned every gun within range upon ours; but so terrible and effective was the point-blank service of our two-and-thirties, that at evening a breach was declared practicable, and Lord Wellington, no admirer of the Fabian system of delay, deter-

mined, when it became dark, to carry Picurina by storm.

Well, the storming-party was selected from a part of Picton's division, and we of the light were allowed to volunteer. On we went with scaling ladders; but the ditch was so immensely deep that it was impossible to cross it. At last we broke down the gate—on rushed our fellows with the bayonet—the French grenadiers as sturdily resisted them—a regular steel affair ensued; and though a strong support moved from the town to assist the defenders of the fort, in a short

for eight o'clock that evening. The day was beautiful, and when the order was issued marking the positions the different brigades should occupy, the soldiers were in high spirits, and set merrily to work cleaning their arms and appointments, as if preparing for a dress parade. On individual officers the effect that note of preparation caused was very opposite. One, as brave a fellow as ever breathed, passed me apparently in deep abstraction. Suddenly he seemed to awake from an uneasy reverie, recognised me, and shook me by the hand.

"God bless you, Edward," he said. "Farewell, old boy; before midnight I shall be in another world." I laughed at him. "Yes, O'Connor, it will be so. I would not own it to another; but you and I have fought side by side ere now, and you will acquit me of timidity. This, O'Connor, is my last fight! Will you oblige me in one matter? When you came up I was just thinking which of our fellows I should ask the favour of."

“Any thing, my dear Jack, that I can do, you may command.”

“Come aside,” he said—and we walked behind the huts. “Here,”—and he put a parcel into my hand—“when I am gone, have that little packet conveyed to England, and delivered as it is addressed; and just add a line or two, to say that it never left my bosom until I confided it to you.”

It was a leather case, and I fancy contained a miniature and some letters. The direction was to a young lady, who, if report was to be believed, was deeply attached to my gallant friend. I

“Well met, O’Connor,” he cried, as he took my hand. “Here we are a brace of subs to day, and to-morrow we shall be captains. We’re both at the head of the list, and surely some of the old fellows will get a quistus before morning. Egad, to-morrow you and I will drink to our further promotion, if there be a sound bottle of Sherry in Phillipon’s cellar.”

“Yes, my dear Dillon, but you must recollect that our skins are not more impervious than those of other men to steel and lead. There’s work cut out for us, take my word for it, before we’ll be made free of the Frenchman’s wine-bin.”

“Pshaw!—I would not give a dollar to insure my company; and auld Clooty will never leave in the lurch a steady servant like you, Ned. Hang it, I wish it were dark, and the work begun. I intend to sup in a convent to night.”

“Indeed! then ‘would it were supper time, and all were well’”—and we parted.

Twilight came, the sun set gloriously, and many an hundred eyes looked their last upon

him that evening. Soon after eight the regiments were under arms, and the roll of each called over in an under voice. A death-like silence prevailed—the division (the light) formed behind the quarry in front of Santa Maria, and after a pause of half an hour, the forlorn hope passed quietly along, supported by a storming party consisting of three hundred volunteers. I was attached to the former. We moved silently—not a man coughed or whispered—and in three minutes afterwards the division followed.

At that moment the deep bell of the cathedral

ness—darkness—a compression of the breathing—the dull and ill-defined outline of the town—the knowledge that similar and simultaneous movements were making on other points—the certainty that two or three minutes would probably involve the forlorn hope in ruin, or make it the beacon-light to victory—all these made the heart throb quicker, and long for the bursting of the storm, when wild success should crown our daring, or hope and life should end together.

On we went; one solitary musket was discharged beside the breach, but none answered it. The light division moved forward rapidly, closing up in columns at quarter distance. We reached the ditch—the ladders were lowered—on rushed the forlorn hope—on went the storming party. The division were now on the brink of the sheer descent, when a gun boomed from the parapet. The earth trembled—a mine was fired—an explosion—an infernal hissing from lighted fuses succeeded—and, like the raising of a curtain on

the stage in the hellish glare, the French lining the ramparts in crowds, the English storming parties descending the ditch, were placed as distinctly visible to each other as if the hour was noontide!

A tremendous fire from the guns of the place, which had been laid upon the approaches to the breach, followed the explosion; but undauntedly the storming-party cheered, and bravely the French answered it. A murderous scene ensued, for the breach was utterly impassable. Notwithstanding the withering fire of musketry from the ~~vanquished~~ light artillery brought immediately to

attempt; and while they viewed from the parapets a thousand victims in the ditch, they called in derision to the broken columns, and invited them to come on.

I, though unwounded, was hurled from the breach, and fell into the lunette, where, for a few minutes, I had some difficulty to escape suffocation. The guns of the bastions swept the place where I was lying, and the constant splash of grape upon the surface of the water was a sound any thing but agreeable. The cheers had ceased—the huzzas of the enemy at our repulse had died away—and from the ramparts they amused themselves with picking off any one they pleased. Fire-balls occasionally lighted up the ditch, and showed a mass of wretched men lying in the mud and water, mobbed together, unable to offend, and, poor wretches! at the mercy of the enemy, for retreat was impracticable. As the French continued hurling cart-wheels, planks, and portions of the masonry of the parapet, which our own battering guns had destroyed, it was pitiable

to see the feeble efforts of the wounded, as they vainly strove to crawl from beneath the rampart, and avoid the murderous missiles that were momentarily showered down. Now and again, the gurgling noise of some one drowning close beside was heard in the interval of the firing; while the groaning of those from whom life was ebbing—the cursing of others in their agonies—joined to the demon laugh which was frequent from the breach above, gave the passing scene an infernal colouring, that no time shall ever obliterate from the memory of him who witnessed it.

Yet never was the indomitable courage of

studded with spikes and bound firmly by iron chains, were suspended in front of the battered parapet like a curtain—a deep retrenchment cut off the breach from the interior, even had an enemy surmounted it—and a line of *chevaux-de-frise*, bristling with sword blades, protected the top. With these insurmountable obstacles before them, and death rained upon them from every side, even in handfuls the light and fourth divisions continued their desperate attempts; and many of the bravest, after struggling to the summit of the bastion, were shot down in their vain attempts to tear defences away, which no living man could clamber over.

While the sanguinary struggle was proceeding in the bastions of Trinidad and Santa Maria, the castle was escaladed on the right, and the bastion of San Vincente afterwards, by the fifth division on the opposite quarter of the town. After a fierce contest of an hour, the third division mounted by their ladders, and driving all before them at the bayonet's point, fairly carried the

place by storm, and remained in possession of the castle. Nothing could surpass the daring gallantry of the escalade; and the heap of dead men and broken ladders strewn next morning before the lofty walls, showed how vigorously the enemy had resisted it.

Leith's division were unfortunately delayed from their scaling ladders not arriving for an hour after the grand assault had been made upon the breaches. But they nobly redeemed lost time; and while the Portuguese Caçadores distracted the garrison by a false attack on Pardaleras, a

palisade—descended a deep counterscarp—and crossed the lunette behind it—and this was effected under a converging fire from the bastions, and a well-sustained fusilade, while but a few of the assailants could force their way together, and form on the rampart when they got up. But the leading sections persevered until the brigade was completely lodged within the parapet; and now united, and supported by the division who followed fast, what could withstand their advance? They were sweeping forward with the bayonet—the French were broken and dispersed—when, at this moment of brilliant success, a port-fire, which a retreating gunner had flung upon the rampart, was discovered. A vague alarm seized the leading files—they fancied some mischief was intended—and imagined the success, which their own desperate gallantry had achieved, was but a ruse of the enemy to lure them to destruction. “It is a mine—and they are springing it!” shouted a soldier. Instantly the leaders of the storming-party turned. It was impossible for

their officers to undeceive them. The French perceived the panic—rallied and pursued—and friends and foes came rushing back tumultuously upon a supporting regiment, (the 38th) that was fortunately formed in reserve upon the ramparts. This momentary success of the besieged was dearly purchased—a volley was thrown closely in—a bayonet rush succeeded—and the French were scattered before the fresh assailants, never to form again. The fifth division poured in. Every thing gave way that opposed it. The cheering was heard above the fire—the bugles sounded an

of the *tete-de-pont* that defends the great stone bridge across the Guadiana. Those who happened to be around him describe the scene, as witnessed from the heights above San Christoval, as grand and awfully imposing. The deep silence after the divisions moved to their respective positions—the chime of the town clock—the darkness of the night—the sudden blaze of rockets and blue-lights from the garrison, followed by an interval of deeper obscurity—the springing of the mine, succeeded by the roar of artillery, and bursting of shells—while musketry and grenades kept up an endless spattering—all this, added to the uncertainty of the assault, must have tried even the iron nerve of the conqueror of Napoleon's best commanders.

Presently an officer rode up at speed, to say that the attempt to force the breaches had failed, and the result had been most disastrous. Pale, but unmoved, the English general issued calmly his orders for a fresh brigade to support the light division; and the *aide-de-camp* gal-

loped off to have it executed. An interval of harrowing suspense followed. Another of the staff came up in haste. "My lord, General Picton is in the castle." "Ha! are you certain?" "Yes, my lord. I entered it with the 88th." "'Tis well—let him keep it. Withdraw the divisions from the breach." An hour after, another horseman announced the fifth division to have completely succeeded in escalading San Vincent. "Bravely done! Badajoz is ours!"—was the cool half-muttered observation of the British commandant.

lation, and were permitted to retire to Elvas. In the morning I obtained a few hours repose, notwithstanding the deafening yells of the excited soldiery, and their incessant discharge of musketry, as they went firing through the streets, or blew open the doors of the wine-houses, and indeed of all other dwellings, which were vainly closed against them. I had seen the breaches in all their horrors—I had again crossed them in daylight—and I turned my steps towards the castle and bastion of San Vincent, to view the places where my more fortunate comrades had forced their way.

It was nearly dusk, and the few hours while I slept had made a frightful change in the condition and temper of the soldiery. In the morning they were obedient to their officers, and preserved the semblance of subordination; now they were in a state of furious intoxication—discipline was forgotten—and the splendid troops of yesterday had become a fierce and sanguinary rabble, dead to every touch of human feeling, and filled with

every demoniac passion that can brutalize the man. The town was in horrible confusion, and on every side frightful tokens of military license met the eye. One street, as I approached the castle, was almost choked up with broken furniture; for the houses had been gutted from the cellar to the garret, the partitions torn down, and even the beds ripped and scattered to the winds, in the hope that gold might be found concealed. A convent at the end of the strada of Saint John was in flames; and I saw more than one wretched nun in the arms of a drunken soldier.

population, among which many of the loveliest women upon earth might be found? All within that devoted city was at the disposal of an infuriated army, over whom, for the time, control was lost, aided by an infamous collection of camp followers, who were, if possible, more sanguinary and pitiless even than those who survived the storm!

It is useless to dwell upon a scene from which the heart revolts. I verily believe that few females in this beautiful town were saved that night from insult. The noblest and the beggar—the nun, and the wife and daughter of the artisan—youth and age—all were involved in general ruin. None were respected, and few consequently escaped. The madness of those desperate brigands was variously exhibited; some fired through doors and windows; others at the church bells; many, at the wretched inhabitants as they fled into the streets, to escape the bayonets of the savages who were demolishing their property within doors; while some wretches, as if blood

had not flowed in sufficient torrents already, shot from the windows their own companions as they staggered on below. What chances had the miserable inhabitants of escaping death, when more than one officer perished by the bullets and bayonets of the very men, whom a few hours before he had led to the assault?

As evening advanced, the streets became more dangerous, and after I had examined the spot from which the escalade of the castle had been effected, I determined to leave the fortress by the first sallyport, and return for the night to our

from this infernal scene of tumult and villany, by a safer but more devious path.

I turned down an unfrequented lane. I remembered that a lamp before an image of the Virgin had formerly burned at the corner, but of course it had been unattended to during the horrors of the past night. Not fifty paces from the entrance, a dead man lay upon his face. I looked at the body carelessly—life was scarcely extinct, for the blood was oozing from an immense wound in the back; and as the jacket was still smoking, the musket of the assassin had probably been touching the wretched man, when the murderer discharged it. It was the corpse of a dragoon; he, of course, had stolen into the town for plunder, and the unhappy delinquent paid a deep penalty for his crime. He held a loaded pistol in his hand. I wrenched it from his grasp with difficulty; for even in death, he clutched it. I was now better armed, and I hurried down the lane in the direction of the sallyport.

This unpretending quarter appeared to have

partially escaped the ravages to which the better portion of the town had been exposed. Only a few of the outer doors were broken in, and momentarily as I proceeded, the yells and firing became more distant. Just at the bottom of the lane there was a large inn. Within all was quiet as the grave—business and bustle were over. No doubt the spoilers had been there, and, save in an upper window, not a light was to be seen. On coming up, the cause of its desolation was manifest. The outer door had been blown open, and a dozen casks, some spilt or staved, others lying

The report of a musket was followed by a shriek so loud, so horrible, so long sustained, that even yet it peals upon my ear. I forgot all personal consideration—and, as if directed by a fatality, rushed into the gate, and ascended the staircase. Cries and curses directed me onwards. The door of the chamber from which they issued was unclosed. I sprang forward, and the scene within was infinitely worse than even the outrages I had witnessed could have harbingered.

Near the door, a Spaniard, whose dress and appearance were those of a wealthy farmer, or a small proprietor of land, was extended on the floor quite dead; and a ruffian in the uniform of one of the regiments of the third division, was standing over the body, busily engaged, as well as drunkenness would admit, in reloading his musket. Beyond the victim and his murderer a more horrible sight met the eye. The woman, whose piercing scream had attracted me to the scene of slaughter, was writhing in the last agonies of death, while a Portuguese Caçadore

coolly wiped the bayonet that had been reddened in her blood. What occurred on my entrance was the transaction of a few moments. Both ruffians turned their rage on me, and I endeavoured to anticipate them by commencing hostilities. With the pistol I had taken from the dragoon I shot the Irishman—I blush to say it—but he was my countryman—through the heart, and then attacked the Caçadore. In size and strength we were pretty fairly matched. He was armed with a fixed bayonet—I with a sabre, ground to the keenness of a knife; but his own crime gave

burst through the panel up to the socket, and the villain was at my mercy. As he vainly strove to disengage his weapon, I stepped back and struck him across the head. He fell forward. Thrice I repeated the cut—for the scoundrel was full of life—and I was not contented until his skull was fractured by reiterated blows, and the brain scattered against the wainscot. I see you shudder, Mortimer; you have yet to learn how quickly war will brutalize us. At your years I could not have treated a rabid dog so savagely; but that scene withered every feeling of human pity, and I for the time was as truculent as the villains I had dispatched.

The curtains blazed more fiercely, while I stood like a presiding demon above four bleeding corpses—the murderers and their victims. The blood of the dead Caçadore had spirted over me, and from hilt to point my sabre was crimsoned. On the floor a quantity of gold and silver coins were scattered, while the glare of the burning tapestry gave a wild and infernal light that fitted

well that scene of slaughter. I could stay no longer—the woodwork was already in flames—and a few minutes would wrap the devoted house in a sheet of fire. I stooped and picked a cartridge from the cartouch-box of the dead Irishman, to reload my pistol. Something beneath a chair sparkled. Was it the eyes of a dog? I removed the antique and cumbrous piece of furniture—and there a child, some three years old, had cowered for shelter! To leave it to perish in the flames was impossible. I caught it up—it never cried—for terror I suppose had taken away the

butt in their route was duly tasted as they passed along.

My appearance was instantly observed. "It's one of the foreigners," said he who seemed to be the leader, as he remarked my dark uniform—"Shoot him; Jim!"

Fortunately the command was given in Irish, and I replied promptly in the same language. In a few moments we understood each other perfectly. They wanted to secure their booty, and I volunteered to be their leader, and effect a retreat.

To prohibit drinking for the future, under a threat of abandoning them instantly, was my first order; and it was, though reluctantly, acceded to. I next examined their arms, and ordered the muskets that had been discharged to be reloaded. The booty was next secured; and forming them into something like military order, I gave the word to march, and proceeded towards the sally-port, the leader of a banditti, whom no consideration, but an avaricious anxiety to save the pro-

duce of the night's villany, could have induced to quit a scene of violence and blood so congenial to their brutal fancies. I brought them and the hapless orphan safely from the town; although their own pugnacity, and the appearance of the rich booty they had obtained, involved us in several skirmishes with parties who were flocking into the city, on the same vile errand as that in which my "charge of foot" had been so successfully engaged.

"And did you discover who the murdered parents of the poor infant were?"

made out the proprietors, who had obtained a temporary shelter in one of the detached offices that had escaped the flames. They could give me no information, nor did they even know the names of their murdered inmates. They, poor victims! had arrived in Badajoz from a distant part of Andalusia only the day before we invested the town, and remained there during the siege. Having a large sum of money in their possession, they fancied themselves safer in the city than in attempting to remove homewards, as the roads in the vicinity were infested by guerillas and professed banditti. They stopped accordingly, till Badajoz fell; and, in common with many hundreds of unfortunates, their lives and property paid a sad penalty for the obstinacy of Philippon's defence."

"And what became of the poor orphan, O'Connor?" asked O'Shaughnessy.

"I sent him to England, placed him at a school, and when he is old enough he shall be a soldier. Should I fall, he is not forgotten. But

come—to bed—to bed. Sound be your slumbers, boys!—before the night of to-morrow many a stirring spirit will be quiet enough—and on the sward of a battle field, “sleep the sleep that knows not breaking.”

THE END OF THE WORLD.

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THE DEAD LIEUTENANT.

Vain was ev'ry ardent vow,
Never yet did Heaven allow,
Love so warm, so wild, to last.

MOORE.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE DEAD LIEUTENANT.

THERE is no sadder office imposed upon a soldier than to arrange the simple property of some departed comrade for the rude auction to which, when death occurs on service, the assets of the fallen are submitted. Every thing recalls the deceased ; and every article, however trifling, renews past recollections. In that jacket, haply, the tale was told which set the table in a roar ; and these epaulets may have sparkled in the ball-room, or glittered on the field of battle.

In a convent adjoining the bridge of Vera, a young officer had expired shortly after the night encounter between the British light troops and the French column, which forced that passage in

their retreat. Though vastly superior in force, and with darkness and a storm favouring the attack, the posts were gallantly contested; and when the rifles were obliged to yield to numbers, they occupied the convent walls, and kept up a fire so incessant and well directed, that the narrow bridge was heaped with corpses, and the loss of the retiring enemy was computed at nearly a thousand men. The British casualties were comparatively trifling—and Frederick Selby was the only officer that fell.

Nature had never designed Selby for the trade

of a martial spirit; and in the winter season when a campaign ceased, he seemed to dream his life away; how he employed himself in cantonments none knew, and indeed none inquired.

He was the second son of a gentleman of considerable fortune, and had, as it was generally understood, been intended for the church. He graduated accordingly at one of the universities; when circumstances occurred which changed the colour of his profession, and sent to the field one far better suited for the cloister.

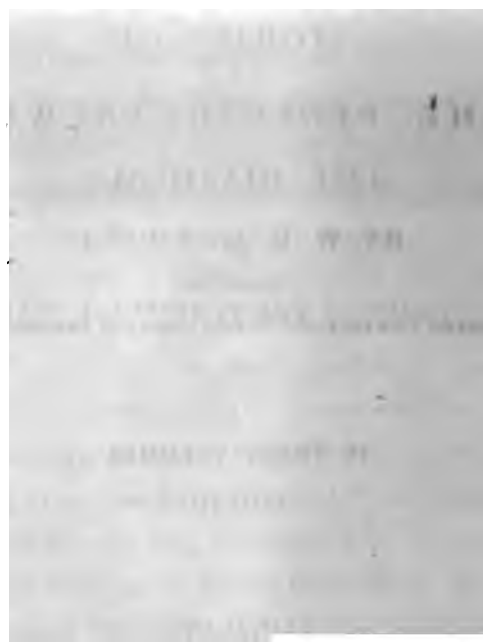
Death, however, disclosed the secret, that while living he had kept so closely; and in his writing-case, the memorials of an unfortunate attachment were found. He had loved a female of humble parentage, and, it would appear, that a sentimental engagement had been formed, discovered, and dissolved. To remove him far from the object of his passion, his father had purchased a commission, and sent him upon service. The wide sea rolled between him and the forbidden fair one; but the heart remained un-

changed—and he died cherishing a passion which time and absence could not subdue.

That most of the private hours of the deceased were spent in literary composition, many fragments in prose and poetry, mixed among letters from members of his family, proved. The effusions generally alluded to the unhappy attachment that had sent him from his native land ; and some of them were addressed to his mistress. These were, of course, carefully destroyed. One, however, was of a different description—it seemed some legendary tale connected with the ancient



THE BIVOUAC;
OR
STORIES OF THE PENINSULAR WAR.



THE
B I V O U A C ;
OR
STORIES OF
THE PENINSULAR WAR.

BY W. H. MAXWELL,

AUTHOR OF

“STORIES OF WATERLOO,” “WILD SPORTS OF THE WEST,” &c.

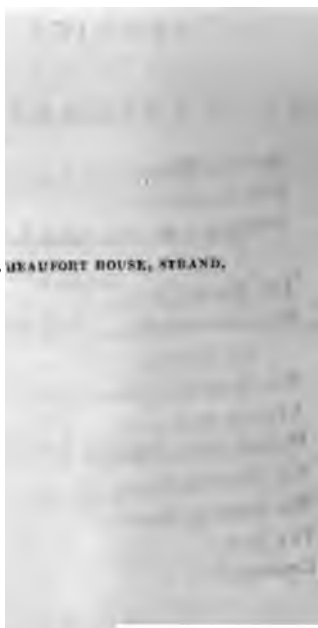
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CONTENTS
OF
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	PAGE
BARBARA MAXWELL	1
LIFE IN THE MOUNTAINS	67
CONFESSIONS OF A GENTLEMAN WHO WOULD HAVE MARRIED IF HE COULD. (SECOND CONFESSION)	75
THE MAJOR'S STORY	109
ENTRANCE INTO FRANCE—BATTLES OF THE BIDASSOA AND THE NIVELLE	145
SICK QUARTERS—DEPRESSION—AN UNEXPECTED LETTER	161
ARRIVAL IN LONDON	179
MEMOIR OF A RUINED BEAUTY	193
THE HOUSE OF DEATH	215
THE HOUSE OF FEASTING	231
THE DUEL	253
CONCLUSION	265

THE BIVOUAC.

CHAPTER I.

BARBARA MAXWELL.

THE night was dark and stormy—the snow fell fast—and the wind howled through the leafless branches of the old oaks which encircled Selby Place. Doors shook and casements rattled, as the frequent gusts struck them heavily. All without was gloomy and inclement, while the scene of joyous revelry within, formed a striking contrast. Christmas had passed, and right hospitably had that ancient festival been observed. Twelfth-night was come, and all that was noble and fair for many a mile around, were assembled in the baron's hall; while in buttery and

kitchen, yeomen and domestics were carousing merrily.

The feasting was ended, and the hall cleared for the dance. The music struck up a sprightly measure; and in the silver stream that a hundred tapers shed over the polished floor, stately dames and bright-eyed damsels were led from their seats by the noblest of the youth of Britain.

It was the mirthful season of the year, venerated alike by saint and sinner, when a world's deliverance had been achieved, and why should not all be happy? Beauty was beaming from

bride. Who had not heard of Barbara Maxwell? When the wine-cup was drained to beauty, Barbara's was the name that hallowed it. If the minstrel lacked a theme for his ballad, whose would he choose but Lord Nithsdale's daughter? The hunter left the chase to gaze upon her, if her white jennet passed him on the moor; and even the fair themselves owned that Barbara was fairer. All said she was born to be loved; while, unconscious of the charms which envy admitted to be peerless, her unassuming gentleness would win a heart that could look on loveliness like hers, and be unmoved.

Long and ardently George Selby had wooed and long had success been doubtful. A lover's path is rarely smooth, and his had been beset with difficulties. But what will not the ardour of youthful passion overcome? George Selby's truth and constancy succeeded; and Barbara knelt with him at the altar, and became his for ever.

We have already hinted that obstacles had

delayed Selby's marriage; and though he had won his love, the union, strange as it may appear, had not been one that either of their families approved. Among the flower of the northern youth, Selby was the first. He was barely touching on ripe manhood, and his face and figure were just what please woman. Gifted with natural talents, his education had been sedulously attended to—and in the manly exercises of the times he was accounted perfect. His turn had been a military one—and he had already served two campaigns in the Low Countries, and gained

And what could cloud a union of two persons thus formed for each other? Alas! that which has caused many a heart to bleed, and flung thorns in the path of love—that which has caused the deepest attachment to pine away and perish! Selby and his beautiful bride were professors of different creeds, and both bigoted in their respective beliefs on matters of religion. George dissented warmly from the errors of the Italian church—while Barbara had been taught from infancy to consider that of her forefathers the true and apostolic faith, and that to the shorn priest of Rome, the power alone rested to remit her sins, and point the path that would lead her to salvation.

That love—and tenderly they loved each other—should stifle any unhappy misgivings in two young breasts, might have been expected, and under common circumstances such would have been undoubtedly the case. But a fierce and acrimonious temper pervaded the religionists of these uncharitable days—a dreadful discovery

had just been made—and accident brought to light the foulest conspiracy that the demon spirit of bigotry had ever fabricated.

Within a few days after Selby had wedded Barbara Maxwell, the infernal plot to blow up the king and parliament was accidentally detected, and the chief of those concerned arrested, tried, and brought most justly to the scaffold. A dreadful sensation was created by the atrocity of the plan; and men, hitherto tolerant, became ruthless persecutors. The fears of the timid could not be readily allayed, and the fiercer-minded turned

Maxwells clung to their fathers' faith and resisted the attempts of the reformers, caused them, amongst others, to be suspected. The master of Nithsdale was denounced as a principal in the infernal plot; and a journey, solely undertaken for pleasure, was tortured into a political embassy to the court of Spain, to require for the conspirators countenance and assistance from abroad.

That Selby's young bride should not feel unpleasant consequences from this burst of national indignation, which the atrocious designs of the popish party so justly drew forth, would be impossible. All who surrounded her were uncompromising followers of the reformers, and were, from old prejudice and late disclosures, deeply incensed against every disciple of the church of Rome. Barbara had been taught to consider Protestant hostility to her faith as implacable; and, conscious of the enormity of the recent plot, with the sensibility of a soft and fearful nature, she fancied that she perceived an abated ardour in George Selby's love, and read

distrust in looks, that were never turned upon her but in kindness. Even the homage her charms elicited from her husband's kinsmen was mistaken—and gentle attentions were, as she imagined, used only to hide concealed dislike.

Lord Nithsdale had been residing for some time in the ancient dwelling of the Maxwells—the castle of Caerlaverock—and the inclemency of the season for many weeks prevented Barbara from having any communication with her father's insulated home. Nothing beyond the general rumour had reached her respecting the plot. She

found that some of those implicated had been

obloquy and shame on the unoffending members of their own faith.

When it was asserted that Ralph Maxwell was connected with the conspiracy, George Selby behaved as a brave man should, and stoutly maintained the innocence of his absent relative. His devotion to his bride was tender and respectful, and such as her birth and beauty demanded; and though he observed with pain a striking alteration in her manner, never for a moment did he permit his own regard to appear abated.

On the Twelfth-night, according to the ancient usage of the Selbys, all that was distinguished in the north of Cumberland had assembled in the castle hall. Noble as was the feasting and light the revelry, one circumstance clouded the general joy. She who should have been the meteor beauty for all to gaze on, had, with evident exertion, contrived to sit through the banquet; her deep dejection could not be concealed; and while all beside were waiting for the dance, Barbara had left the hall.

Where was the bride? In vain the eyes of many sought her through the spacious chamber. The ball was stayed—the lady inquired for—and her maid presently returned with an apology from her mistress, excusing, under the plea of indisposition, her temporary absence from the company. The baron knitted his dark brows in anger, and took his son aside. What passed was brief, and in a whisper. A red flush coloured young Selby's cheek, and bowing to his father he left the hall. The lord of the mansion waved his hand—the music played a merry air—and the dance com-

conversation to pass between his cousin and himself.

“George,” said the latter, “what has disturbed you thus? believe me, others besides me have noticed it. Rouse thee, man. Our customary festival, and the noble company who have met to share our twelfth-night revelry, demand a merrier mood than thine.”

“Alas!” replied the youth, with a deep sigh, “Alas! Harry, I am very wretched; and I cannot with so sad a heart put on a smiling countenance.”

“And what thus chafes you, George, and at such an ill-timed season?” inquired his kinsman.

“If it be not a secret—”

“Secrets I have none from thee, Harry. Friends from infancy like us—”

“Why yes, George,” returned Wyndham; “few brothers love each other better. My mother lived only to give me birth, my father was slain six months after, and I was thus left an orphan. I was nursed in the same chamber that

thou wert—in boyhood the same teacher schooled us; we played at the same games; and when we grew up, and went together to the wars, one tent covered us, and on the same field we rode our first charge, side by side together. Can Harry Wyndham do aught to relieve his friend's distress?"

"Alas!—No. My sorrows are beyond thy friendly ministry."

"And yet, George, surely thou shouldst be happy if ever man was. Hast thou not won an honourable reputation? Hast thou not before

“ I am lost in wonder ! ” exclaimed his friend and cousin.

“ Look down the corridor, and be certain there be no listener near.”

Wyndham obeyed and replied,

“ We are safe from intrusion—none can approach but I shall see them. Whoever comes hither must cross yon stream of light, and it will reveal him to us. Speak, George—Speak freely to your kinsman.”

“ Harry,” returned Selby, “ I know your love for me, and can I mark mine better, than by opening to you those secret sorrows that shall be hidden from all else, even my father. Alas ! that I should have lived to make the sad confession. Barbara loves not ! or if she does, her love is for another ! ”

Wyndham started as if a dagger pierced him.

“ Hold, George—for God’s sake—hold ! Art mad, or doting ? By Heaven ! had any tongue but thine breathed such a thought—so damning

to the reputation of my gentle kinswoman—I would have stabbed him !”

“ If, Hal, thou canst feel thus, marvel not that my cheek is blanched, and my heart agonized beyond what thou or any other can imagine.”

“ But,” exclaimed Wyndham passionately—“ why these dreadful doubts? What, George, can have produced this sad and horrible suspicion? She—Barbara Maxwell! She—whose angel looks are only emblems of her purity. By my soul’s hope, the thing is utterly incredible !

stipulated that she should be permitted to worship Heaven as she pleased. I plighted a knight's word that in this her will should be undisputed ; and I have kept that promise faithfully. Lest in a household like ours, where all are ardent Protestants, any thing should interrupt her in the performance of her religious duty, I fitted for her use the oratory our grandame used, before the blessed reformation turned our house from idle ceremonies to the true faith. 'There Barbara's devotions were sacred from intrusion—none but herself had access to that suite of chambers—she alone keeps the key—and when she would meditate or pray, no eye save that which looks on all, watches her secret orisons.'

“'Twas right, George,” exclaimed Selby's kinsman. “Need I tell thee how much I hate that idolatrous communion ; but till it please Heaven to point out the path, and clear the film away which papal delusions have cast over Barbara's reason, as a true knight and lover, thou

must protect her in the free exercise of what she thinks religious worship."

"I have done so, Harry, and so will I continue doing. But to proceed For a time, if ever man knew happiness, I found it in Barbara's arms. She trusted to the creed in which she had been so artfully schooled; but though her views were false, there was in all she thought and did such fervid purity, that, if innocent adoration be pleasing to the Deity, hers must have been acceptable. Once, and once only, I stole unguardedly upon her privacy. She was kneeling before

which the Florentine had poured the magic touches of his pencil that I worshipped. No—it was to Him alone who had power, that I bent my knee. We rose. She flung her arms around me, and as she kissed me, murmured, ‘George, though our creeds may differ, surely, lord of my love! our hearts are one!’”

“And can a doubt touching the love of such a woman cross thy mind, George?”

“Alas! my friend, what an alteration has a few weeks made. From the time that infernal conspiracy was discovered, I have remarked her become thoughtful and depressed. Fancying that she feared I should imbibe a prejudice against popery, that might even extend itself to her, I endeavoured by renewed attentions to prove that my love was unchangeable. She seemed to feel my kindness, wept upon my bosom, and thanked me for my confidence. Suddenly a change came over her. She became timid, absent, and desponding. If I entered her chamber unex-

pectedly, she started as if I were an object to be feared. Her devotional exercises were redoubled, and yesterday she was for several hours secluded in her oratory. To a casual observation which her long absence inadvertently elicited, she blushed and trembled like a guilty thing. But last night —damnation! — and he struck his forehead wildly with his hand. “ Even to you, loved and trusted as a brother, I can hardly mention it. Last night, uneasy thoughts had kept me waking, while Barbara was slumbering at my side. The chamber lamp beamed out with uncommon bril-

He shuddered in an agony of passion—both remained silent for some moments, until Selby recovered and continued—

“ You marked her bearing at the banquet—her sadness was apparent to every guest ; and when by my father’s command I sought her chamber, to entreat she would return to the company, her maid—the daughter of her nurse—in whom she reposes boundless confidence, told me in evident confusion, that her mistress had retired to the oratory, and begged she might not be disturbed. What, Harry, can all this mean ? Is it a fitting season for telling beads, when the noblest in the land have come to my father’s hall for mirth and revelry ? Yes, I might pardon readily this ill-timed devotion ; but, oh, God ! how can I excuse that guilty kiss—how extenuate that damning exclamation ! ”

In vain for a while did Wyndham strive to calm the excited feelings of his unhappy kinsman. By degrees Selby’s violence softened down, and he was composing himself to rejoin his father’s

guests, when Wyndham touched his arm, and pointed to a female figure which crossed the light, and hastened towards the place they had conversed in.

“It is Barbara’s attendant,” he whispered.
“What can bring her here?”

Gillian approached; and as she drew near the recess, the kinsman heard her mutter,

“Where can he be? They said he passed this corridor. Hist! Master of Selby!”—and she raised her voice.

“Who calls?” said George Selby, advancing

I'll pawn my life upon her love. Never could evil heart inhabit a form like Barbara Maxwell's. Go, my kinsman ; I'll be before you, and announce that your lady's indisposition is so far abated, as to enable her to meet your father's guests again. Believe me, the tidings will be welcome."

"Ay—Gillian, say to your mistress that I shall be with her presently ; and thou, Hal, excuse my absence as thou best canst."

He said, and hastened to his wife's apartment, while his kinsman rejoined the merry company, and intimated that the "Border flower," as Barbara was called, might be presently expected.

But where went Barbara Maxwell ? When she left the hall she hastened to her own chamber, and summoned her attendant. Gillian presented her mistress with a light, placed a basket in her hand, and then took post in the passage, while her lady proceeded to the oratory. 'Twas a strange time for prayer ! but it was not to pray that Barbara stole from the festive throng. Softly she unlocked the chamber of devotion ; and when

the door opened, what did the taper glance on? Was it the sculptured effigy of some holy martyr, or the softer features of the penitent Madonna? No—Stretched on a sofa, a young cavalier was slumbering; and instead of rosary and missal, a rapier and pistols were laid upon the lady's table!

On tiptoe the bride of George Selby approached the sleeping knight.

“Hist, Ralph, wake—’tis I—’tis Barbara!”

The stranger sprang up, clasped the fair visiter to his heart, and kissed her again and again.

pass unnoticed. Come, Ralph, let's see what Gillian has provided,"—and she lighted a lamp that hung from the ceiling, while the Master of Nithsdale quickly unclosed the basket.

"Ah! blessings on thee, Gillian. Look, Barbara, what fare the gipsy has lighted on. A pasty that would tempt a monk; and two flasks, Rhenish and Burgundy, if I judge rightly from the colour. If this be hardship, as you called it, may my visitations never be more severe. Why, in the next room, there is a pallet fit for a cardinal's repose. Well, I'll to supper, and do thou return. Do, dearest sister, thy absence will seem remarkable."

"I cannot leave thee, Ralph; for there is a mystery in this concealment that has made me truly wretched."

"Tush—I'll tell it thee to-morrow."

"Now, Ralph—be it now—if thou lovest me."

"Well, if it must be so, our supper and story shall proceed together. Draw that cork, Barbara; 'tis not the first time thou wert my Hebe,

girl—*girl*—Ah! girl no longer. Pardon me, honoured *dame*—I cry thy mercy. My next visit mayhap will dub me uncle.”

“Hush, thou malapert. Come, do not trifle with me. If you knew how miserable I am and have been, you would without delay remove my doubtings.”

“Well, well, Barbara; it must be done. Sit down. Wilt thou not pledge me? Right Rhenish as ever crossed the sea. Thou must drink, Barbara; else, as you know, I may be drugged, unless I insist upon that security.”

Barbara—and how to stir the hot blood of the Maxwells. 'Tis idle to conceal aught from thee now. Fill me another goblet, and I will satisfy thy questioning." He sipped the wine she gave him, and then continued :

"Residing in England, thou hast heard no doubt much concerning that villanous conspiracy?"

"Oh, yes—and deeply has it grieved me. Those, Ralph, who are opposed to our religion, will brand us all with the obloquy that horrible design has raised against a whole community."

"True, girl, and there lies the cause of my temporary concealment. I was, as you well know, travelling for improvement. I heard abroad a strange story of the detected plot. It was, as I then believed, a wild and exaggerated rumour. I posted homewards, and landed on the coast some sixty miles from this. Judge my astonishment, when there I saw a printed proclamation, and, among many names, a reward offered for my apprehension as one of the chief conspirators!"

Barbara Maxwell sprang from her chair.

“For thee, Ralph! Thy name enrolled among a gang of murderers! Didst thou tear down the lying paper, and cudgel to death the villain who had dared affix it?”

“I did neither, Barbara. The paper remains untorn; and it would have been poor vengeance for the Master of Nithsdale, to beat the bandle’s brains out—if he had such.”

“Go on, Ralph. What didst thou, in God’s name?”

“What a Maxwell should. I despatched

foreign agent. By Heaven! I nearly lose all temper, to think that such a felon charge should have been whispered against one of the house of Nithsdale. What, though we have held our fathers' faith, when has our loyalty been impeachable? Look to the motto of our arms. When once, our fealty slighted and our services forgotten, in his extremity a king sent to our ill-used ancestor for support—when the royal cause was almost hopeless, and others had refused to arm, or sent an evasive reply—what was the answer of our grandsire? '*I am ready.*' But come, Barbara, you must away. Remember, my love, that a stronger tie than sisterly regard now binds thee!"

"Ralph—why remain here? Come among thy equals boldly, and proclaim your innocence. I will bring my husband here. My life on it, George Selby will maintain his brother's honour against any who dare insinuate aught against it."

"He has already done it nobly. In a com-

pany some days since, my name was coupled with the traitors. Boldly did thy lord assert me to be innocent, and flung his glove upon the floor for any to take up, who would venture to question my loyalty. Barbara, thou hast chosen well; and Selby shall be to me a brother—sy—in love as well as law. But thou must go—nay, not another minute. Banish that fearful look. Away then in thy brightest smiles—and tell thy husband that in the court of England's king there is no beauty can match 'the Border flower.'"

"Oh—thou wouldst coax me by gross flat-

I need assistance, was not my father's hall nearer than this of Selby? Did I need allies, is there a Maxwell in the Border that would hold back to right me; ay, even were it only to be effected by the sword? Had I sought Caerlaverock, my enemies would whisper, that the power of the father had screened the offending of the son: Did I permit thy husband to know that I was returned, and his kindred espouse my quarrel, would it not be said that the loyalty of the house of Selby had saved the master of Nithsdale from the consequences of his treason? No—let two days pass. My trusty friends will answer my call. I will burst upon my enemies unawares; and ere they dream that I have ventured on the sea, I will knock at the palace-gate, proclaim the traitor has returned, and were the slanderer proud Buckingham himself, if hand and rapier fail not, wash off the stain upon my honour in the blood of him who coupled treason with the name of Ralph of Nithsdale.”

“And must I leave thee in this solitude, and thy spirit chafed thus?”

“Oh—go, my sister. Farewell till morning”— and with a playful effort he led the fair one to the door, bade her a kind adieu, and next moment was the lonely occupant of the oratory, and left to his meditations for the night.

When Barbara returned to her chamber, the visit of her lord was announced. Aware how strange her absence must have appeared, she despatched Gillian to seek him. George Selby obeyed the summons promptly, and hastened to

“Come in, love,”—responded a voice that once thrilled upon his heart like music. There stood Barbara; recent excitement had added to her charms—the flushing cheek—the sparkling eye—Oh! she had never looked so beautiful!

“George,” she said, “I fear my absence has displeased thee; yet, trust me, love, I did not mean intentional offence. I have been ill and nervous. Some of these days I will confess the cause, and when known, I feel it will be pardoned. Am I forgiven, love? You once said, when lovers quarrelled, a kiss should seal their reconciliation,”—and she held her rosy lips to his. “What makes you so sad, George? Have I not owned my fault; and is it not my first offending?”

“Oh, Barbara,” he replied, in a voice so melancholy, that the sunken tone almost made the bride shudder. “Would that woman’s love were less maddening, but more enduring?”

“What mean you?”—and she coloured to the forehead. “Thy words imply a doubt on mine.”

A deep sigh was the only response; while Barbara's eyes lightened.

"And is mine already questioned?" she said, with more than customary warmth. "What, George, was then this suit so easily won—my plight of love so lightly given—that a doubt is cast upon its permanence?"

Piqued at the insinuation her husband's words conveyed, she disengaged her hand from his, and turning her head away, tears rolled down her cheeks. To see that loved one weep—to mark the flush of indignation, that even a suspicion of

bara, "the blue of heaven's own tint," beaming more brilliantly than ever!"

George Selby glanced over the sparkling throng; he wished that his kinsman, who had so recently heard the confession of his uneasiness, should see now that suspicion was thrown to the winds, and that he was once more happy. But Wyndham was nowhere in the room; and on inquiry, his cousin learned that since their interview in the corridor, he had not returned to the dance. Astonished at his friend's continued absence, Selby despatched a servant to seek him in his own chamber. The room was untenanted—the castle was searched in vain—but Harry Wyndham was nowhere to be found.

An hour passed—a domestic whispered something to the bridegroom. Promptly the latter left the hall—the dance proceeded—and the kinsmen remained absent.

When he parted from his unhappy cousin, Wyndham was returning to the company he had

quitted, when he suddenly encountered Herbert the falconer, in the passage. To an inquiry of what brought the old man to such an unusual place, and at such a time, he replied it was to find out his young lord.

“You cannot see him, Herbert. He is particularly occupied. Are there not fitter times to speak about thy wood craft, old boy, than when thy master is engaged as he is this evening?”

“Wood craft!” exclaimed the falconer. “Dost thou think me mad, Master Wyndham, or fancy that hawk or hound would bring me to his pre-

Wyndham procured a lamp, and Herbert followed him. They entered the youth's apartment, and closed the door carefully.

“Now for thy tidings, Herbert, and cut the story short, or my absence may be noticed by my uncle, and chafe his temper.”

“I have seen a ghost,” said the falconer.

“Pish—what folly, old man. My kinsman would not have thanked thee much to have called him from his guests, and given him such intelligence.”

“You may smile, Master Wyndham, but I saw it plain as I see you; and afterwards observed its shadow on the wall.”

“Ghosts leave no shadows, master falconer. Hast thou not been too familiar with the ale-butt? Come, Herbert, keep thy spectre for to-morrow, and to bed. I'll to the hall,”—and he raised the lamp, and moved towards the door.

“Stay—for God's sake! listen but a moment. I am not drunk or doting. The tale will surprise you.”

“ Well, be brief, Herbert. Know ye not what discourtesy it is to leave my uncle’s festival ?”

“ My tale shall be a short one, Master Hal. I was returning from the hazle copse, where I had harboured an outlying stag for our chase to-morrow; and my nearest path, you know, lay through the ancient pleasure-grounds. I entered the shrubbery, and when I turned the angle of the building, saw a light beaming from the window of the old oratory, which the Lady Margaret occupied some fifty years ago, and which, as I have heard, the Master’s bride uses for her acts

“Pshaw, Herbert, it was only the Lady Barbara, or Gillian her maid. When was it, old man, that this occurred?”

“Not five minutes since. Had proof been wanting that my sight had not deceived me, a shadow of a man, as it were in the act of fencing, fell on the tower wall. I looked some minutes longer; the shadow disappeared, but the light, when I left the tower, continued burning steadily.”

“Good Herbert, is this no coinage of the brain—no trickery of vision?”

“None, by the God of heaven! It struck me to be so strange, that I could not rest until I apprized the Master of the circumstance.”

“Better, Herbert, have told it as you have to me. A man—a light; it must be looked to. Go—I will join thee at the southern tower. Keep thy counsel, Herbert.”

“Fear me not, Master Wyndham. I am no tale-maker.”

“Well,” said the youth, “if this tale be true,

I cannot fathom woman. No, no—it's impossible. The fame of Barbara Maxwell was never tainted by a breath of suspicion. 'Tis a mistake ; but duty to my kinsman demands that I should clear the mystery away."

He said—threw a cloak round him—belted on his sword, and in a few minutes joined the falconer at the appointed place.

"The light burns steadily," said the old retainer ; "and not a minute since, a form too tall for woman's crossed the casement."

"Herbert, we will soon put thy story to the

again borne on the wintry blast, and their cheerless vigil formed a sad contrast to the merriment that reigned within the building.

“Herbert, thy eyes have for once deceived thee,” said Wyndham to his old companion. “The lady has left her taper burning; that was the light, and herself, most likely, the form that crossed thy vision. The snow-drift blinded thee on thy return from the thicket. Keep close counsel. Trust me, old friend, none save the lady and her maid enter that lonely chamber, from which the light is glancing.”

“No,” returned the falconer—“no, Master Hal, I am not astray. There is not among the youngest retainers in Selby Hall an eye that tracks a slot, or drives a cross-bolt truer. Saints of heaven! is not that the shadow of a man?”

Clear and distinct a figure was traced on the lighted space, which the lamp within the casement of the lady’s oratory had thrown upon the tower opposite!

“Hush, and assist me to climb the fretwork of

the window," said the youth, in a low whisper to his attendant; and unbelting his sword and flinging off his cloak, Harry Wyndham mounted easily with Herbert's assistance, and placed himself before the framing of the lattice.

The sight he witnessed appeared rather the delusion of a dream, than any thing of reality. Holy saints! In the private chamber of the high-born dame—the place sacred even from the visit of a husband—a young and handsome cavalier was calmly seated, and the disposition of every thing about, told that the chamber had

in all besides he was most carefully attended to.

As the light fell directly on his face, Wyndham could mark it accurately. A nobler countenance was never painted by an artist. The profile of the unknown was strictly Grecian, while coal-black hair, a thin moustache, a high and noble forehead, eyes sparkling with intelligence and shaded by arched brows, completed a face as manly as it was handsome. Suddenly the stranger pushed away the book, and rising from his chair, strode once or twice across the chamber. His figure was tall, slight, and elegant; and his dress—in those days no trifling indication of the wearer's rank—was rich enough for any earl in Britain. After a turn or two he resumed his seat, replenished the goblet that stood before him, and then quietly resumed the book he had for the time laid aside.

Wyndham had seen enough. Softly he descended from the window, and with the falconer retired to a short distance.

"Hast thou seen aught strange, Master Hal?" inquired the retainer.

"I have seen, Herbert, that which, hadst thou sworn it, I would not have given credence to."

"Was it a living thing that haunts that deserted chamber?" inquired the old man suspiciously.

"It was a sorry sight to witness, and one that must be concealed even from thee, Herbert. Thou art faithful. Watch, as thou lovest thy young lord, that casement until I return to thee. I will not be long absent."

the servant directed him to the library; and great was his astonishment when he found the room well lighted, and several of his more immediate relatives assembled at the summons of his kinsman. A gloomy and death-like silence ensued upon his entrance; and his surprise was still more increased, when his father, in deep emotion, came into the apartment leaning on Harry Wyndham's arm. A creeping thrill of horror—an undefined feeling that some dreadful event was at hand—a terror that something calamitous would presently ensue, shook George's nerves, and seemed to chill his life-blood, while, with a convulsive effort to know the worst, he broke the fearful silence which all observed.

“Noble sir, friends and kinsmen, in God's name, what means this strange and ill-omened meeting? Speak—in mercy, speak!”

“George,” replied the baron, “thou hast ever been a good and dutiful son. Wilt thou for filial love, and in honour of these gray hairs,

listen to thy father's counsel and promise to abide by his advice?"

"My noble father, what is that impends over me? What misfortune has befallen? If you would not break my heart, speak out—tell me the worst. Am I not a man? Have I not nerve to bear adversity?"

"Yes, my son. Courage was never wanting to a Selby—but coolness often."

"I will be calm, father. Speak, if you would not kill me."

"George," said the baron, in a broken voice,

words appeared to choke him—"Barbara is false!"

"False!" cried young Selby. "What lying tongue dared couple falsehood and Barbara?"

"Calm thee, my boy. There is, alas! proof—damning proof—within these very walls!"

"Oh God! and are my worst suspicions true? and could that image of an angel be the wretched thing you call her?"

"Were the person with whom she had offended placed within your power—"

"Ha! Dost thou, my noble father, ask a Selby what vengeance he would exact from the man who had dishonoured him? Blood! father, blood!—an ocean, if it flowed within his veins, would be all too little to wash my shame away!"

A murmur of approbation filled the room.

"I cannot, will not blame thee, George; but he that has thus injured thee, must, if noble, have fair play. Vengeance, but not murder, becomes the hand of a Selby."

“ But where is the villain? Is he in the house? Is he among the company?”

“ Patience, my son—patience. Think ye that I would rob thee of thy just revenge? No, George. Old as this arm is, were there none other to avenge the injury, mine should at least attempt it.”

“ Barbara — once idolized Barbara — a short month since had a saint taxed thee with harbouring an unholy thought, I would have said he slandered thee!” exclaimed George Selby; and, overcome with grief, the unhappy youth leaned

to perform—justice first, my son, and vengeance afterwards. Thou knowest the temper of the times, and that thy erring wife is of a faith opposed to our profession. If we act unadvisedly, the Romish party will not scruple to assert, that we have wrongfully accused her of falsehood to thy bed, only to work her ruin—and the penalty of crime will be imputed to our hatred of her religion. Hast thou courage to witness the disclosure of her shame, and remain here, while to her own face we establish her dishonesty?”

“Yes, my father; but the exposure of her guilt must not be before any save our own kinsmen. Barbara, though thou hast withered my young heart, and humbled my pride to the very earth, I will not have thy fall exhibited to those who are even now gazing on thy beauties, and fancying thee too pure and glorious for this sinful world.”

“Thou art right, my poor boy. Here her offending shall be proved—and here the painful scene shall end.”

“And here,” murmured the unfortunate youth, “shall I take the last look of that face, which earthly beauty never equalled.”

“Go, Hal,”—said the baron—“assume a look of indifference if thou canst, and without causing observation, lead the Lady Barbara hither. Is Herbert outside?”

“He is, my lord,” replied one of the Selbys.

“Let him remain till we require him here.”

A period of five minutes elapsed, while the old baron endeavoured to confirm the fortitude of his son, and enable him to support the painful

“ I crave your pardon, my lord. I have mistaken Master Wyndham—and been, without design, an intruder on these gentlemen.”

“ Would that it were so, lady. You have been sent for here, and I have been called on to disclose as sad a tale as ever passed a father’s lips.”

“ My lord !”—and the blood mounted to her cheeks.

“ Yes—’tis a trying visitation. I speak not of my own withered hopes, when I see the wrecked happiness of my only child, just as he had started on his earthly career, with as brilliant prospects as ever opened upon any.”

“ My lord—what means all this ? My husband’s silence—the unusual presence of these gentlemen ?”

“ It means, lady—that thou hast sullied thy own fair fame, and rendered him who confided in thee, wretched, miserable, and dishonoured.”

Pale and red by turns, Barbara Maxwell was silent for a moment ; but suddenly, and as if a

new impulse strengthened her, she advanced a step or two, and boldly addressed the baron . . .

“Never, Lord of Selby, did I fancy that the day would come when such a charge as thou hast made, dare be uttered in the hearing of a husband. Go on—and let me know the crime by which Barbara Maxwell has stained her reputation?”

Those near George Selby observed a shuddering of the whole frame, while his beautiful wife was speaking.

“Would, lady, that this were the indignation

the place he had reclined upon, and bursting past his kinsmen, exclaimed in a voice of thunder,

“Ha! In the oratory. Heaven, I thank thee!”—and catching up a sword, he threw aside those who vainly attempted to restrain him. His hand was already on the door, when Barbara rushed forward and seized him by the arm.

“Off!”—he cried. “Off—lest I harm thee! Bad as thou art, I would not willingly injure a hair of thine.”

But fearless and undismayed, Barbara held his arm.

“Sirs—gentlemen—bear me, and only for a moment. I am strange to you all. I am a woman; and, at least by men, that plea should be admitted. Once—had any told me an appeal to another would be required, I would have said he spoke a falsehood. What wouldst thou? I own at once that there is a knight where none has been before. I have but one boon to ask—let him be brought hither—and let the guilty be confronted?”

“Lady, I can refuse you nothing,”—replied George Selby, in a tone almost inaudible.

“Wilt thou, Master Wyndham, do me a small kindness, and summon my attendant hither?”

The youth bowed, left the chamber, and presently returned with Gillian. All seemed amazed, and marvelled what the result of this strange scene would be.

Calm as if she was merely despatching her tirewoman on some ordinary message, the Border flower pulled forth a key, and drew a jewel from her finger.

seemed bewildered, and the dead silence was for some minutes unbroken. A quick step was heard along the corridor—the door flew open—a tall and noble youth entered the chamber, and advancing to the bride, demanded haughtily to know “who had dared to offer her offence?”

“Ralph!”—cried the lady of young Selby—but ere she could say more, her husband started as if an adder stung him, and half unsheathing his sword, exclaimed,

“The very name she murmured in her sleep!”

Wyndham seized his arm, and the baron whispered,

“Peace, my son — peace, an’ thou lovest me.”

The young stranger threw a bold glance round the room, and taking the lady’s hand, continued,

“Barbara—for what purpose am I required? I could only gather from your tirewoman, that some one had shown you a discourtesy—what means this mystery—and why are these gentlemen collected? Doubtless thy gallant husband

is not here, or a slight offered to his fair dame, would not require a brother's arm to redress it?"

"Brother!" exclaimed several voices, while George Selby dropped his rapier on the floor—Barbara clung to the stranger's arm—and the baron in amazement advanced to the unknown, and inquired his name and title.

"A name," replied the youth haughtily, "I need not be ashamed to own; although some villains availed them of my absence, and branded it with treason. I am Ralph Maxwell of Caer-

Master of Nithsdale continued—“Wilt thou explain this mystery, Barbara; and is yonder gentleman your lord?”

“He was, Ralph; and, had I believed him, one who would have cut the throat of any knave who would have whispered aught against my loyalty. But circumstances have changed—my fame is sullied—and even my fidelity to his bed is more than questionable. On these grave charges, am I arraigned before this noble lord and these good gentlemen. I sent for thee to witness the proofs of the delinquency, which has severed the holy bond that bound me at the altar to George Selby, and sends me back with thee, my brother, to my father’s hall, a fallen star—detected, disgraced, and repudiated.”

A momentary silence was broken by the unhappy husband.

‘Lady—’tis but an idle attempt for me to try and deprecate your honest indignation. I have lost you. You will, no doubt, return with your noble brother, and I leave England for ever.

When I am gone—when the last token comes to thee, Barbara, from my dying hand—then forgive my madness; and give a tear to the memory of him who committed one offence, and expiated his insanity by a short and suffering existence. Wilt thou not bid me farewell—one brief—one last farewell?”

The deep, the agonizing melancholy of George Selby's look and voice—the emotion of the old baron, as tears ran down his furrowed cheeks—while their stout kinsmen bent their sorrowful faces

by different creeds, I laughed at the whisperings of those who would have insinuated a doubt of our being happy. That I loved you as a wife should love, my heart best knows. I would have followed thee through weal and woe—had malice tarnished your escutcheon, I would have descended with you to obscurity, and a murmur would not have escaped my lips—had poverty befallen us, the cottage would have been to me as welcome as the hall—had sickness stricken you, who would have found me absent from your couch? Well—let this pass. You ask me to say farewell.” —A deep and painful pause succeeded, and every heart beat faster. “Lord Nithsdale’s daughter has no forgiveness for a slight upon her constancy—but George Selby’s wife thus punishes the doubtings of her husband—”

Ere the last words were uttered, Barbara was weeping in her lover’s arms. A burst of admiration came from every lip; while the old baron, as he wiped away a tear, caught her from his son’s embrace to clasp her in his own.

“Now, by St. George!” he exclaimed, “I thought myself the proudest father in Britain; but I knew not till this night thy worth, my sweet Barbara! Go, my loved children; our absence will else create surprise. Go—join the company, and I will present thy gallant brother to our kinsmen, Barbara. What—ho—wine here, knaves. Pick thee, my daughter, the fairest out, and the Master of Nithsdale shall claim his partner presently.”

When Selby and his happy wife had left the

sister, until I had cleared the slander from my name."

"And in doing it," replied the old baron, "where couldst thou find any who would stand to thee more truly than my kindred and myself?" When the base lie was named, we cleared thy fame, and offered the Selby's sword to maintain the loyalty of the Master of Nithsdale."

"That, my good lord, I know; and that has bound me to my gallant brother. But, noble Selby, I will assert mine innocence where it was maligned; and from James himself demand to be confronted with my accuser."

"Tush, noble Master," said one of the Selbys. "Thou mayest spare thy journey, and spare thy horses. Before the Proclamation was two days old, the knave who gave the information had lost his ears for perjury. Thou and some others whom he denounced, made his story so incredible, that the tale was sifted and found false; and to avoid the rack he mounted the pillory. So strong was men's indignation, and so harshly

was the poor wretch used, that he survived his exposure barely time sufficient to make a fuller confession of his villany.”

“And was the information of such a slave deemed enough to warrant this insult to the house of Maxwell?”

“Alas! my dear boy, thou canst not even fancy the consternation which that abominable plot occasioned. Men looked on their neighbours with suspicion; scoundrels profited by the excitement, to increase the general apprehension.

revelry sustained, and day broke ere the last of the guests had crossed the drawbridge.

* * * * *

“George,” said the beautiful bride, as she sate upon her husband’s knee, and twined his dark ringlets round her snow white fingers. “My heart tells me that I have been wanting in my duty to thee. When Gillian told me that my brother, after four years absence, had arrived, I was so overjoyed to see him, that I acceded thoughtlessly to all he asked. Even *his* secret should not have been concealed from *you*. Some other wanderer may come and scare thy falconer’s wits out. I need no better retirement to offer my devotions in, than that which mine own closet affords. Let then, my love, that distant oratory be locked as it was before I came to Selby Place.”

What the reply was is not recorded; but ere a second twelvemonth passed away, “the Border flower” knelt at the same altar with her hus-

band; and Barbara Maxwell was the first of that ancient name that conformed to the tenets of the reformers, and renounced the doctrines of the church of Rome.



LIFE IN THE MOUNTAINS.

The time I've lost in wooing,
In watching and pursuing
The light that lies
In woman's eyes,
Has been my heart's undoing.

MOORE.

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1900

CHAPTER II.

LIFE IN THE MOUNTAINS.

“WHY then, upon my conscience!” ejaculated Major O’Shaughnessy, who had depressed his person to accommodate himself to the height of the door, and dropped in as the legend of the departed soldier had ended. “You are well employed in reading romances, while wiser men are settling their traps for a march. Because you have got a decent habitation of your own, I suppose you imagine we shall spend our Christmas in the Pyrenees.”

“I suspect, Terence,” replied O’Connor, “our tenure is nearly at an end, and our wooden

dwelling-place will afford shelter, ere long, to some of the brigades in the rear."

"You may swear it," returned O'Shanghnessy. "We have been too long looking the enemy in the face, and far too neighbourly, for things to continue so. At the bridge yonder, the sentries go on and off duty with a bow, and the officers exchange snuff and compliments."

"Well, surely this is better, Terence, than the exterminatory system that our allies and the

to climb the steep and rugged path with difficulty.

“Think you, friend O’Connor, that the commander will permit the snow to catch him here, when the supplies must depend upon a string of peasants like these to transport them! No, no—we shall soon advance; and it is whispered that fords across the river have been discovered by the Spanish fishermen, and that they have been sounding the bottom, while the French sentries believed they were only looking for flounders.”

“Well, the sooner we’re off the better,” replied O’Connor. “I am anxious to find myself in ‘Beautiful France;’ and much as our present residence has been admired, it would be rather too airy an abode when the snows come down. You dine with us no doubt?”

“You never made a shrewder guess, Ned. The flavour exhaled from your camp-kettle as I passed it, removed every objection. Our larder at home is not extensively provisioned; there is

nothing there that I can see but a goat hung up, which seems to have died of a consumption; and from its lank look, as it dangles from a peg, I have my doubts after all that it is only a Frenchman's knapsack."

Dinner ended, and more than one bottle was emptied. A subaltern reminded O'Shaughnessy that the sequel of his amatory adventures remained untold.

"I can't venture yet. It is too early in the evening to recal these melancholy recollections."

my confessions, I suppose. I have suffered, it is true; but I hope I have borne my disappointments like a Christian man and a stout soldier."

After some entreaty, a long deep sigh, and a longer and deeper draught from a well-filled wineskin, the gallant commander thus continued the narrative of his second disappointment in love.



**CONFESSIONS OF A GENTLEMAN WHO
WOULD HAVE MARRIED IF HE COULD.**

There's tricks i' the world.

* * * * *

O Heavens! is't possible a young^mmaid's wits
Should be as mortal as an old man's life?

HAMLET.

Our wooing doth not end like an old play ;
Jack hath not Jill.

LOVE'S LABOUR LOST.



CHAPTER III.

CONFESSIONS OF A GENTLEMAN WHO
WOULD HAVE MARRIED IF HE COULD.

SECOND CONFESSION.

You may readily imagine that after my recent *escapade*, I was in no hurry to recommence a matrimonial campaign. Biddy Maginn—the devil's luck to her—had given me such a damper, that for six months I would hardly look at an only daughter over a pew, or stare in at the window of a country banker. I was so mortally afraid of women, that I am persuaded, had a priest proposed "the difference," I should have

embraced him and his offer, and taken it with vows of celibacy. But it was otherwise allotted; and though men generally escape with one visitation, I was fated to undergo a couple.

I was garrisoned in Dublin. The laugh against me had nearly ceased. I was drilling regularly in the Park, a well-conditioned subaltern as need be, and as the song says,

“ Minding my business, and just as I ought to be,”

when alas! a letter from an old crony of my

—for Ulick was a marksman*—and he decided at once that we should try our luck; for, as he said, “Luck’s every thing!” Accordingly, leave was obtained—the paymaster made an advance—and Ulick and I landed safe in Bath, determined to “take fortune at the hop.”

My lady was delighted at my despatch, when next morning I presented myself at her breakfast-table. I shall never forget her. She was full five feet eight, and stiff as a drill sergeant. Thin she was—for Ulick affirmed upon his conscience, “there was not flesh enough upon her bones to bait a rat-trap.” Her maid was sent away—the door was carefully secured—and with a grave and important clearing of the voice, she thus broke the ice and entered on particulars.

“Terence,” says she, “it’s fifteen years since

* *Marksmen*. In Ireland, gentlemen are thus designated who neither read nor write, and whose sign-manual is thus formed :

his
Ulick ✕ Flyn.
mark.

I laid an eye upon you—you were then but a *gossion*;^o but as I told your poor dear mother, if the Lord spared you, you might grow up like your uncle Mick; and Mick was the handsomest lad in Loughrea, when I married my lamented husband, Sir Daniel. I had a steady regard for your mother; she held good cards, played a safe game, and was an excellent woman—though she died fifteen guineas in my debt, and your father never had the decency to answer my letter when I sent in my claim. Had it been a tradesman's

answerable for my father's omissions in answering letters."

"God forbid you should, my dear boy! No, no. I have sent for you,"—and she made a pause.

"For what purpose, madam?"

"To make your fortune," was the reply. "Ay, your fortune, Terence. All money in the funds, and six hundred a year secured upon the best estate in Northamptonshire."

"Then with the fortune I presume there is a lady saddled?"

"And what objection is there to one may I ask, when she can pay for her keeping handsomely, Terence, dear?" quoth my Lady Featherstone.

"Oh, none in the world," I responded.

"Well, then," she continued, "you have no objection to a wife with ten thousand pounds ready, and six hundred a year?"

"The Lord forbid I should be so sinful," I replied, "as to repine at the will of Providence, if

such an accident in the way of matrimony befel me "

"Now, Terence, remember I was your poor mother's bosom friend, and I am sure I may speak freely to her son."

I nodded a full affirmative, and my Lady Featherstone looked knowing as a jailer.

"Terence, is it honour bright between us?"

I assured her, as Ollapod says in the play, that "I was full of honour as a corps of cavalry."

"It's all right," rejoined my lady. "and now

“Bad enough, madam,” said I.

“Now, Terence, you must lend me the money.”

“*I!* my lady. Where could *I* obtain it? I know of no way possible but by stopping the Bristol mail.”

“No, no, Terence”—quoth the dowager. “We need not resort to such desperate expedients. We do not require taking to the road, when we have only to go to the altar.”

“Ah! I understand your ladyship; but we talk as if success were certain. I may not like the lady, and the lady may not like me.”

“Pshaw!—leave the lady to my management, I will answer for her accepting you.”

“Ay, madam, but I cannot answer for myself. She may be old—ugly—disagreeable.”

“She is none of these,” said Lady Featherstone.

“How old is she?”

“Thirty.”

“I am scarcely twenty-two,” said I.

“And what signifies eight years?” demanded the dowager. “Is there not a clean thousand as a set off against each of them, man?”

“Is she good-looking?”

“Very pleasing both in appearance and manner,” replied my lady.

“Her family?—you know we are particular about that in Ireland.”

“She is sister to a baronet, and of one of the oldest families in Northamptonshire. Come, I am sure I have satisfied every doubt, and you

may be strange to you. In short, my lady, no flaw in her reputation—no kick in her gallop.”

“Blast—flaw—kick in her gallop!” repeated the dowager. “No wonder I can scarcely comprehend you. If you mean to ask if my friend be a person of unblemished character, I beg to assure you, sir, that I associate with none other!”

“A thousand pardons, madam; but to be candid—not six months ago I was within a point of becoming Benedict—and the lady was so provident, that before the third moon waned she would have obliged me with an heir.”

“Indeed! On that score you may be quite at ease. Miss Woodhouse is propriety itself;—and now having given you all the information you demanded, will you oblige me with the loan of two thousand pounds, for which I will pass you a *post-obit* on my personal property?”

“Certainly, my dear lady; and I shall be too happy to find myself in a condition to be serviceable to you.”

“Thank you, Terence; and now I will call

upon Miss Woodhouse, and ask her to tea. She has one little particularity—she never goes out without her maid; and you must make yourself agreeable to the *fille-de-chambre*, for she is an immense favourite with her mistress.”

“Well, madam, and which of the ladies am I to make love to first? Shall I open with *mademoiselle*, or commence with the spider-brusher?”

“An excellent plan to lose both,” returned the dowager. “No, Terence, urge your suit briskly with the mistress, and open your purse-strings

lodgings, that men admire her still—and is ten times more solicitous to procure a husband for herself than for her mistress.”

“Then I’ll settle the maid in double quick!”

“Good God! sir, what do you mean?”

“Why nothing, my lady, but that I’ll run my valet, Ulick Flyn, at her.”

“Ah—I understand you. Is he a person on whom we may rely?”

“He is my foster-brother, and true as steel.”

“Smart—good-looking?” pursued the dowager.

“Not a handsomer light-bob in the company.”

“And he will make love to a woman if you desire him?”

“That he will, madam—or if I do not. May I order him to bring my cloak here early?”

“Certainly, and I will take care that Lucy sees him.”

We separated—my lady to invite the bride elect to tea, and I to acquaint my foster-brother with our plan of operations, in which it had been

determined that he should take an important share.

Ulick was overjoyed at the intelligence, and quite ready to enter the field, and carry Miss Florence, as the maid was designated, by sap or storm.

At the proper hour the fosterer* and I moved to the scene of action. Fortunately, a few drops of rain rendered a cloak-bearer necessary; and when we arrived at Lady Featherstone's, and I was ushered to the drawing-room, Ulick Flyn

ing to melancholy. Her manners were affable and polished; and after being half an hour in her company, I came to a conclusion, that there was no cause or impediment to prevent her becoming niece to my honoured relative Mrs. O'Finn.

Indeed matters seemed to progress well, and things "looked like housekeeping." I was very graciously received. The hostess was "mine trusty ally," and my aide-de-camp, Ulick, had safely established himself in the body of the place. The evening passed agreeably; and when the hour to break up had come, Lady Featherstone proposed that as the night was fine and Miss Woodhouse resided in the next street, we should dispense with a coach, and walk home. No objection was made by the lady—the servants were summoned—we bade good night to the dowager, and departed.

There's nothing, my boys, like seeing a woman home, when you want to make love to her. There you have the contact of the arm, and at parting a tender squeeze of the hand. I had certainly the best of fair play during the march.

No one pressed my rear; for when I threw my eye slyly back to see if the abigail was within ear-shot, Ulick had her close to his side as the gizzard of a turkey, and they were in deep conversation at the distance of half a street. As I walked off, I overheard her say in a soft tone of entreaty, "Now, Mr. Flyn, you'll be sure to come?" to which, in a tender and insinuating voice, was responded, "Arrah! Miss Lucy, will a duck swim?" and a salutation, loud as the report of a rocket-nistol, was succeeded by an "O fy—how

nothing to Miss Woodhouse, with her ten thousand (minus two), and six hundred a year. How gloriously would I break in upon Mrs. O'Finn, when I presented her with the sister of a baronet—the scion of a stock almost as ancient as our own!

Three days passed. Lady Featherstone played a deep game, Ulick covered himself with glory, and on the following day, as a matter of course, I was to propose and be accepted. The dowager had ascertained from the lady that my suit would be received; and Ulick had so far progressed with the ancient spider-brusher, that she admitted having saved four hundred pounds, acknowledged he was irresistible, and only stipulated that he should quit the army.

“And what will you do, Ulick? I inquired.
“Will you marry Miss Florence?”

“Why then, upon my soul, I won't. Of course your honour and the lady will be married first; and when you're clane off, I'll bolt by a side door and give Miss Lucy the slip. Arrah! master,

sure ye wouldn't have me tie myself to an ould catabaw of her sort. Lord! she's fifty if she's an hour."

I could not remonstrate, and we retired for the night.

The day "big with the fate" of Terence O'Shaughnessy came. My worthy confederate, the dowager, made the opportunity, and I sighed and was accepted. A fortnight was, after the usual display of maiden coyness, named as the duration of my misery; and on the expiration of

imagine there was yet a chance that they might ultimately be paid. At a card-party the next night, fortune once more smiled upon her. Twice she held four honours in her hand; and whenever she cut in, the rubber was her own. As my leave of absence was limited to a month, I found it impossible to commit matrimony and arrange my wife's assets in that short period, and determined to apply to my commanding officer for an extension, and candidly apprise him of the reason of my non-appearance. I did so; and a very kind letter in reply, acceded to my request, and carried his congratulations.

Four days passed, and ten more would make me Benedict the married man. On both sides preparations for the grand event were making vigorously. Miss Woodhouse had summoned divers dressmakers to her abiding-place; and I had ordered a wedding garment for the occasion, and not omitted "new liveries" for my man. The Lady Featherstone was the busiest of the whole. Accounts that would have lain *perda* to

the day of judgment, were examined; a card-party invited for the next week; and even without permission from the coachman, she ordered her carriage for a drive, as if his wages were paid already. Every thing went on swimmingly. Matrimony, after all, was the only safe path to preferment for a younger brother. In the hymeneal wheel, doubtless, there were blanks as well as prizes; but though there were Biddy Maginns—glory to the prophet!—were there not also Amelia Woodhouses!

mean time she suggested that it would be the more delicate proceeding on my part, to confine my attentions merely to inquiries through my servant. Of course, my Lady Featherstone was in these concerns oracular, and I confided the management of all to her and Ulick Flyn.

But the dowager was not aware that I had now with Amelia a more powerful ally than herself—to wit, the waiting-woman. Miss Florence had become deeply enamoured of Mr. Flyn; and a woman of forty-five, when she loves, loves desperately. With Ulick's shrewdness, every occurrence in the lady's mansion must speedily reach me; and the admission of my man to the domicile of Miss Woodhouse, was as imprudent as permitting a hostile force to establish itself in the citadel of a fortress.

The moon was at the full, and a lovelier night never fell upon the old cathedral, than when I passed it in the way to "mine inn," after losing three guineas at piquet to my Lady Featherstone.

Her darling Amelia's cold was better. The truth was, she had been a little feverish; but to prevent unnecessary alarm, she had confined herself to her own room. In a day or two she would be in the drawing-room, and at the appointed time I would be blest with her hand, and of course made too happy.

This was indeed gratifying news. I sauntered homeward communing with my own thoughts touching the disposition of a part of the eight thousand. At the corner of a street a fraction of

“ Why, Ulick, what the devil’s in the wind? Surely you are taking time by the forelock, in packing for our march.”

With that provoking *sang froid*, which an Irishman, even in desperate cases, delights to indulge in, Ulick proceeded leisurely in folding and depositing the coat in my portmanteau, as he coolly replied,

“ Surely it’s time to get the kit together when the route comes !”

“ Why, what do you mean? I’m not to be married these four days.”

“ No,” responded the fosterer, “ nor for four after that, unless you marry my Lady Featherstone. May bad fortune attend her, the dirty ould canister, night and day !”

“ Speak out, man. What has happened—has Miss Woodhouse changed her mind?”

“ Not that I know of,” replied Mr. Flyn.

“ Is there a national bankruptcy?—for } her money is in the funds.”

“ If there is, I didn’t hear it.”

"Is she dead?"

"Maybe she died within this half-hour."

"Come"—and I lowered my voice—"out with it, man. I guess the cause of her seclusion. Is she as ladies wish to be?"

"Arrah! Bedershin. Is it takin away the crature's character ye are?"

"D——n Ulick, you'll drive me mad. What is the matter? She's not dead—not broke—not blasted?"

"But"—and the valet made a long pause—

loved mortal man as I do you.'—'Ah! then, Lucy,' says I, 'I think it's grammary ye have thrown over me; for if the world was sarched from Killarney to Giberalter, I'll take my book-oath the woman couldn't be found to plase me like yourself.'—'Ulick,' says she, 'you sodgers arn't loaded with money; and I don't see why you and I should not be nate and dacent at our weddin, like the captain and my mistress. There's a few trifles in the way of a present, and sure you'll not like them the worse for coming from me;'—and Mr. Flyn pointed to a huge bundle of miscellaneous garments, the gift of the enamoured *fille-de-chambre*.

"Well," continued the fosterer, "to be sure I thanked her like a gentleman. 'Agh, Ulick,' says she, 'will you ever desave me?'—'Desave you, astore!' said I. 'Arrah, who could look at that beautiful countenance of your own, and not be true as a clock, and constant as a turtle?'—'Ogh,' says she, 'I'll niver know pace till you're mine, Ulick! I wish my poor mistress may be

well enough! but I am sorely afraid we'll have to put back the weddin for a week.'—'Oh—blar-a-nouns!' says I, 'take my life at once, but don't kill me by inches. Do you tell me I must be ten days more without my charmer, and that's yourself?'—'Ah, Ulick, if you only knew the cause; but I'll tell ye every thing when we're married,' says she. By Saint Patrick, I smelled a rat! 'There's a secret,' says I to myself, 'as sure as the devil's in Bannagher; and if blarney will get it out of ye, my ould girl, I'll have it

wouldn't trust me, Lucy? Well, see the difference between us. I couldn't keep any thing from you, even if it was the killin of a man'—and I gave her a look of reproachful tenderness that a hathen couldn't stand. 'Jewel,' says she, as she smothered me with kisses, 'I can refuse ye nothing. Well then—but it's a dead sacet—my mistress is at times a little eccentric.'—'Eccentric!' says I, 'what's that?'—'Why,' says she, 'she labours under quare delusions.'—'Phew!' says I, 'she has, what we call in Connaught, rats in her garret!'—'I don't understand you,' says she, 'but the fact is, for a few days in every month her intellects are unsettled.'—'Is it a pleasant sort of madness, Lucy? Does your mistress amuse herself with the poker—break windows—throw bottles?'—'Oh, no. Poor soul, she is quite harmless, and all she requires is a little humouring, and no contradiction. One time she fancies she is dead, and then we let her lie in state, and make preparations for her funeral. At another she imagines that she has an engagement

100 CONFESSIONS OF A GENTLEMAN WHO

at the Opera ; then we hire a fiddler, and allow her to dance off the fit. Last month she believed herself a teapot ; and this one she thinks she is a canary. I suppose her approaching marriage has put the fancy in her head ; for she sent for a cabinet-maker on Monday, and bespoke a breeding-cage.—‘ A taypot ! ’ said I, as I made the sign of the cross.—‘ Pshaw, ’ says she, ‘ it’s very harmless after all. The captain won’t mind it, when he’s accustomed to it. ’—‘ Feaks ! and I have doubts about that ; for men don’t marry to make

said. 'Go, darlin'—and giving me this watch and a brace of kisses, I lifted my bundle, and she let me out by the back door.'

I was thunderstruck. What a deep plot that of the infernal Jezebel, the dowager's, was! To obtain two thousand pounds, she would have sacrificed me to a maniac. What a pleasant time I should have had—every month, at the full of the moon, to have to send for a fiddler or a coffin-maker, after receiving the pipe of a teapot at the hymeneal altar! What was to be done? Nothing, but what Ulick had already provided for—a retreat without sound of trumpet!

The packing was accordingly continued, and it was now no sinecure. My bridal outfit, which luckily I had money enough to pay for, made an important addition to my wardrobe; while Mr. Flyn, whose personal effects had arrived in Bath very conveniently packed in a hatbox, was obliged to purchase a couple of trunks to transport "the trifles," as he termed them, which had been presented him by the lovesick spider-brusher.

To quit Bath and not convey my acknowledgments to Lady Featherstone, would have been uncivil, and I favoured her with a few lines. I declined the honour she intended in uniting me to a teapot; and as confinement to a cage might not agree with me, I authorized her to provide another mate for the fair canary. I delegated to her the task of delivering my parting compliments to Miss Woodhouse; and at the request of Mr. Flyn, entreated, that "when her hand was in," she would bid a tender farewell to Miss

to excuse herself to Miss Woodhouse, and prove that she was no participator in the flight of the false one; but she could not even obtain an audience, as Miss Flounce slammed the door in her face. Unable to hold her ground any longer, she was literally dunned out of Bath, after having instructed in the art of book-keeping half the tradesmen [in the town.]”

“And what,” said Captain Paget, “became of honest Ulick?”

Major O’Shaughnessy sighed deeply.

forlorn hope and accompanied me. Through life we had never been a day apart—storm and sunshine fell upon us together. God rest thee, Ulick! a braver soldier never screwed a bayonet, nor a more faithful servant followed the humble fortunes of an Irish gentleman than thyself!”

The major wiped away a tear, bade us a good night, and retired to his own hut.

“Poor Terence! It is a warm-hearted animal after all,” said O’Brien. “He never speaks of his fosterer without being affected. I knew him for years, and a more attached fellow to a master never lived than Ulick. How goes time? Pshaw!—not nine o’clock. Is there any brandy in the flask? O’Shaughnessy has a desperate thirst upon him while recounting those amatory mishaps, and he applied to the canteen repeatedly.”

“Faith!” replied one of the subalterns, “he has made a deep inroad upon the Cognac. But, major, do you recollect the conversation we had concerning that mysterious affair at ——?”

“Yes, and I promised to tell you the particulars. Have we time for it now?”

“Oh, yes,” responded several voices.”

“Well, I will not delay you, but make the story as brief as I can.”

He said—and thus commenced.



THE MAJOR'S STORY.

And heedless as the dead are they
Of aught around, above, beneath ;
As if all else had passed away,
They only for each other breathe.

* * *

Who that hath felt that passion's power,
Or paused, or feared, in such an hour ?

PABASINA.

Yes—Leila sleeps beneath the wave.

* * *

My wrath is wreak'd—the deed is done—
And now I go—but go alone.

THE GIAOUR.



CHAPTER IV.

THE MAJOR'S STORY.

“THERE is more romance,” said Major O’Connor, “in real life, than in any fiction which the novelist can imagine, and few men have journeyed through existence long, and not encountered something touching on the marvellous. I never was a sentimental adventurer, and yet I have in my time met with strange occurrences. In the story I am about to tell, I was an inferior actor—and of the other parties, one was a lieutenant in the same company, and the lady I had seen, although I had never been acquainted with her intimately.

At the time, when the transaction occurred I was a subaltern in the 8—th. The regiment was quartered in a large garrison-town in the south of Ireland, and I had been for three months on leave. On rejoining, I was presented at dinner to an officer who had come to us from another corps, and was struck with his appearance and address. He was a remarkably handsome man—at times a little of the puppy; but when he pleased, his manners were very agreeable, and his conversation lively and amusing. As we were

was in some matters exceedingly reserved—we became more intimate. Gradually he became communicative. Much of what he was doing came under my observation; and I was soon aware, from many circumstances I noticed, that he was engaged in an intrigue.

The house we lodged in was in the suburbs of the town, remotely situated, but not very distant from our barrack. After mess we were in the habit of returning home tolerably early; for we had some desperate hard-goers in the regiment, and if a man commenced another bottle after the stipulated dinner wine was drunk, it was almost impossible to get clear of the late sitters before daylight. My companion, when at home, always left a small portion of the window-shutter unclosed—this signal was understood; for almost every night, and at a particular hour, sand was thrown against the glass, and Clinton went out to converse with an old woman wrapped closely in a gray cloak. I remarked her frequently, but never obtained a glimpse of her features, from

the pains she took to conceal them from my view. She was, no doubt, an emissary of Cupid; for Clinton had generally a note or letter to peruse or answer, when he returned from his interviews with the old woman.

Sometimes, in place of a written reply, he followed the messenger directly. On these occasions he always took his sword, and muffled himself in a large blue cloak that belonged to me, which, from its size and colour, was better adapted to conceal the person than his

tinct. The frequency of the occurrence roused my curiosity—I strove to ascertain who the person was, under whose espionage I seemed placed, but I never could succeed. He always kept some distance in the rear—if I walked quickly, he mended his pace—if I loitered, he sauntered after me—if I halted, he stopped—in short, he regulated his movements by mine, and always avoided coming to close quarters. One thing struck me as being very singular—whenever I wore my own cloak, I was certain of being watched to the very door.

It was the evening before the catastrophe. The general had dined with us, and I had remained later at the mess-table than usual. It was good starlight, for there was no moon. That morning, in passing a cutler's shop, it occurred to me, from the constancy with which I was haunted by the unknown, that some outrage was intended against my person, and I thought it prudent to be prepared. I accordingly went in, and had my sabre ground and pointed. On this

evening I had my own cloak and sword; and before I cleared the first street, observed that as usual I was closely followed. Stimulated by wine, and conscious of possessing an effective weapon, I determined to bring my pursuer to action; and halting silently beneath a garden-wall where the road made a sudden turn, I waited for the enemy to close.

A minute brought us into contact. He turned the corner of the fence, and finding me ready to receive him, sprang back two paces.

“ Desist ! ” I exclaimed. “ What am I to desist from ? ”

“ The pursuit of one you never shall obtain ! ” was the reply.

“ You are under some mistake.”

“ I am not,” returned the unknown. “ You have eluded my vigilance twice, and met her you best know where. Attempt it a third time—and your fate is sealed ! ”

“ I tell you, fellow, you are in error.”

“ No—no—Mr. Clinton, you are — ”

“ My name is not Clinton.”

“ Damnation ! Have I been mistaken ? May I inquire whom it is I talk to ? ” he replied.

“ I am called O'Connor, and — ”

“ You lodge in the same house with — ”

“ Precisely so.”

“ Strange ! ” he muttered. “ I would have sworn it. Height, cloak, figure—Ha ! I see how they escaped me. I was on the wrong scent, and they seized that opportunity of meeting.

Pray, sir, have you been ever watched home before?"

"Yes, a dozen times. If I am pursued again, I'll shoot the man that follows me."

"You had better leave that alone. It is a trade that two can work at"—he replied coldly. "But you will not be incommoded again. A hunter with the game afoot, will not turn from it to run a drag, I fancy. Farewell, sir. If you regard your comrade's safety, tell him to avoid the elm-tree walk in the churchyard. He has

I hate every man that wears your livery as I hate the devil. Go—once more, good night.”

He turned round the angle of the wall. A momentary surprise prevented me from following for a time. When I did he was fifty paces off, and presently appeared to vanish from my sight. I walked rapidly after; and when I reached the spot where he disappeared, found it a narrow passage between two garden walls. I looked down the opening—it was dark as midnight—I listened—his footsteps had died away—it was useless to follow—I gave up the pursuit and returned to my lodgings.

Clinton was there before me.

“You are late to-night,” he said. “Have you been serenading your mistress; or, like unhappy me, waiting impatiently for the messenger of Cupid?”

“Serenading I have not been,” I replied; “but I have been conversing probably with the messenger of Cupid—if the aforesaid courier wears

a frieze great-coat, and delivers his commands with a cocked pistol."

"Indeed! What do you mean?"

"Why, that I have been mistaken for you—followed, until I got tired of being pursued; and when I turned on the scoundrel, found I had but caught a Tartar."

"Go on, my dear fellow," said Clinton.

"I forced him to a parley, and he proved to be better provided for battle than myself. In short, we parted as we met. In the dusk, it

“That they had occurred twice; and if you valued life, to desist from a third attempt, and avoid the elm-tree walk in the churchyard.”

“Well,” replied Clinton, “to-morrow you shall know more. It is late; and as we are to have a field day, the sooner we are in bed the better.”

We took our candles and separated.

The garrison review occupied the whole of the next morning; and it was scarcely over, when I was obliged to go on the main guard. About two o'clock Clinton came to me, and asked me to walk out with him. I put on my cap, and we strolled arm in arm into the town.

“George,” he said, “I am so thoroughly convinced of your prudence, that I am going to intrust you with my secret. I require the advice and assistance of a friend, and you are the one I would wish to confide in.”

I assured him that if secrecy were necessary, he might be certain of my discretion—and he continued:

“I find myself surrounded with difficulties—I would almost say danger; but rather than abandon the affair, I would risk life freely. Would you wish to see the lady?”

“Faith! Clinton,” I replied, “I have no small curiosity to see a person who has been the cause of placing me under the espionage of as truculent a gentleman, as ever man conversed with in a retired lane at midnight.”

“It shall be gratified,” he said. “Do you observe yonder shop? It is the second from the corner of the street.”

He pointed out the place where I should find him, and I proceeded to see a fair one, who had already placed me two feet only from the muzzle of a loaded pistol.

I looked above the door, and the name inscribed upon the show-board was a Quaker's. I entered the shop—several starched and steady women were behind the counter—but none of them were of the sort whose charms could endanger the personal safety of any man. Was Clinton jesting with me? At the moment when I was deliberating whether I should not retire at once, a party of ladies came in. Immediately the shopwomen were engaged in attending to them; and one retiring to a door that opened on an inner apartment, said, in a voice that I overheard, "Agnes! thou art required here."

My eyes were instantly turned to the place whence the fair inamorata might be expected—and presently she appeared. I was almost struck dumb with astonishment. A lovelier face than hers I never looked at!

Many a year has passed away, but I shall never forget that beautiful girl. She was scarcely nineteen—tall, and notwithstanding the formality of her costume, the roundness of her arm, and the symmetry of her waist and bosom, could not be concealed. Her eyes were hazel, with an expression of extreme gentleness. Her hair, Madonna-like, was parted on the forehead; but the simple cap could not hide the profusion of its silken tresses. The outline of the face was strictly Grecian—the complexion pale and deli-

Clinton was at the confectioner's, and we left it together.

"Have you seen Agnes?" he inquired.

"I have seen the sweetest girl in Ireland," was my reply.

"Is she not worth loving, George?" he said.

"Worth loving? For one smile I would walk barefoot to the barrack; and a kiss would more than repay a pilgrimage to Mecca."

"Faith! I half repent my having exposed you to her charms, the impression appears to have been so powerful," said Clinton, with a laugh. "But I must tell you a long tale to-night. I cannot dine at mess to-day; there are strangers invited, and I could not steal off in time. I have ordered something at home; and when you return from the barracks at night I shall be waiting up, and we can have a confidential *tête-à-tête*. Here come some of our fellows, and I shall be off. Adieu—you will be home before eleven."

"I shall be with you as soon as I can leave the table without observation."

We parted—he on business of his own, and I to visit the guard.

The party at the mess was large, for we had an unusual number of guests at dinner. The band was in attendance—the wine circulated freely—and notwithstanding my anxiety to leave the room, it was almost twelve before I could accomplish it. I visited my guard, and then set out to keep my appointment with my friend Clinton.

The evening had been close, not a breeze moved a leaf and there was that sultry heaviness

was there, and I reached my lodgings unmolested.

Fitzpatrick, my servant, was sitting up. I inquired for Clinton, and to my surprise was told that he had not returned since he had gone out at dusk. Had he eloped with the fair Quaker? It must be so. Well—that was easily ascertained—for he would require some clothes and his dressing-case. I took up the candles and went to his room. All there was undisturbed; his toilet as it always was, and his portmanteaus in their accustomed places. It was indeed surprising! He might have had an evening interview with Agnes—but to remain till midnight—the thing was impossible. I was lost in a confusion of suppositions, and at last rang the bell, and inquired from Fitzpatrick when Mr. Clinton had been last at home?

The answer was not satisfactory. My own servant informed me that at eight o'clock, when he was engaged in folding some uniforms, my companion had entered the apartment, taken my

pistols, examined the loading and primings carefully, put them in his pocket, wrapped my cloak around him, and telling Fitzpatrick to say that he would be home at ten, left the house.

I was very uneasy—I feared something disastrous — strange misgivings flashed over my mind, and the warning of the formidable stranger was not forgotten. I could not delay longer, for I was obliged to return to the guard-room. All I could do was to leave a message for my friend, and tell him he might expect me at an early breakfast.

preceding evening with the gentleman in the frieze coat was rather a pleasurable recollection.

I hurried along the lone and gloomy passage, and came to the corner of the garden-wall, where I had awaited and confronted the unknown. A few paces forward he and I had held our brief and threatening colloquy. I wheeled round the wall. By Heaven! there he was—the same gray-coated man—the same tall and gloomy-looking stranger!

In an instant my sabre was unsheathed, and as rapidly on his part a pistol presented.

“How now?” I exclaimed. “Why are you here to-night? Advance a step, and I’ll cleave you to the chin!”

“Pish! boy—keep your threats for those who fear them. I mean you no ill; that is, if you do not draw my vengeance on you by some silly indiscretion.”

“What do you want?” I replied. “You labour under no mistake to-night.”

“Oh—no!” he returned coldly. “Mistakes touching the identity of your friend are ended.”

“Why do you stop me then?”

“Merely to ask a question or two, and assure you that if you walk the lane till doomsday, he who confronts you now will never lay his foot upon it afterwards.”

“And what is that to me? I shall come better prepared to-morrow. You have an advantage in your weapons. Put fire-arms aside—I will throw away my sword—and let the best man be the conqueror.”

He laughed hoarsely.

“Foolish boy! I do not question your man-

“Courtesy!” I exclaimed. “Strange courtesy, when men converse with naked swords and cocked pistols.”

“’Tis the last time, young man, that I shall ever cross your path. Your gay companion is doubtless revelling at his mess, or, happier yet, locked in beauty’s arms.”

There was a devilish expression in the latter portion of the stranger’s remark, that struck me with a creeping horror, which I cannot describe.

“I do not understand you,” I replied. “Wherever my friend is, I trust he is in safety.”

“Oh—safe he is—I’ll be surety for that. Will you, however, oblige me with a reply to my question? Did you deliver him the message I confided to you? Remember, I ask an answer as a compliment.”

“I did.”

“Humph! he was warned then! How did he receive the warning?”

“As any brave man should treat an idle threat—with the contempt it merited.”

“Indeed?”—and there was a demoniac emphasis on the word as it seemed to hiss from between his lips. A strong suspicion of foul play flashed across my mind, and I felt half assured that Clinton had been ill-used.

“I fear that you have wronged him,” I said. “If so, he has friends that will assert his quarrel.”

“Well, I must abide their vengeance. But you are wrong. He is at this moment sleeping in the arms of beauty.”

“I disbelieve you. If you have wronged

As before—he wheeled suddenly round the corner—a horse was waiting for him—he jumped upon his back, waved his hand, and in a second was out of sight!

I was perfectly confounded. What was I to do? I dare not betray the secret of my friend; and yet I was desperately alarmed for his safety. Was there no middle course? I determined to confide my fears to a companion, and hurried to the guard-room to communicate as much of my apprehensions to the senior officer as I might do, without compromising Clinton's secret.

Douglas, from the confused and imperfect story that mine was, where so much of the affair was necessarily concealed, was quite unable to advise me. I sent a soldier twice to our lodgings, to inquire if my friend had returned; but he brought back intelligence of his continued absence, and at daybreak I proceeded to the house myself, to try whether I could discover any cause for his mysterious disappearance. My fears were only heightened, and his servant was now se-

riously alarmed for his master's safety. Again we examined his chamber—unlocked his portmanteaus—opened his drawers;—not an article was missing—every thing remained in its usual place, and it was quite clear, that when he left the house on the preceding evening, he had taken nothing away save my cloak and pistols.

Three hours passed, but no tidings of the absentee. I wrote a note to the colonel, stated the strange circumstances of Clinton's disappearance, and obtained his permission to leave the camp before the relief had come. I had

an accident, and others said she had only run away. The last conjecture I felt persuaded was the true one. My fears for Clinton's safety vanished—the absence of both was easily accounted for—my imprudent companion had persuaded the fair Quaker to accompany him, and an elopement was the result. It was useless to ask any questions. Before evening, it was probable that Clinton would return, or acquaint me where he was concealed; and with a load of uneasiness removed from my mind, I turned my footsteps towards the barrack, to resume my guard, and be ready for the relief.

I entered the gate, when the sentry called out, “Sergeant of the guard, here's Lieutenant O'Connor!”

The man addressed ran out—

“Lord! sir, they are looking for you in all directions. Your cloak has been found on the banks of the river. They say Mr. Clinton is drowned, and all the gentlemen and half the regiment are away to look for him.

I was unexpectedly horror-stricken. The mysterious language and dark hints the stranger used, coupled with the disappearance of the Quaker girl, assured me that some dreadful calamity had befallen the unhappy lovers. I took the direction where I observed some soldiers moving; and at the distance of half a mile, a group of red coats and civilians were collected on the banks, and busily employed in dragging the river.

I ran at speed, and was quickly on the spot. Twenty voices pronounced my name, and the crowd made way for me. Colonel Hane was sur-

"I dread that our ill-fated companion is not far from the spot where they were found."

"I am persuaded," I answered, "that his body is in the river; and God grant his be the only one! Under what circumstances were those things discovered?"

"The cloak," replied the colonel, "lay carelessly upon the bank, as if it had been thrown off for some sudden purpose. The pistols were found in the next field."

"Pray let me examine them. They were loaded when Clinton took them, and the charge a singular one. I could not find balls in the case, and my servant cut a musket-bullet into quarters, and two slugs were put into each barrel."

The weapons were brought. On examination it was clear that neither had been discharged, and the divided bullet was found exactly as I described it.

Our attention was called to the search making in the river. A cry arose among the soldiers that the drag had fastened. More hands seized

the rope—something heavy came gradually up—and before it touched the surface, female garments were discernible. Next moment the body of the beautiful Quaker was drawn out, and laid upon the bank. An exclamation of horror burst from the crowd, and all rushed forward to gaze upon a countenance that yesterday had teemed with life and loveliness, and whose beauty even death could scarcely diminish. Her dress was not in the least deranged—the simple bonnet was tied beneath the chin—the gloves were on her hands—not a ribbon was displaced—not a pin

starred companion would be discovered ; and my conjecture was soon verified, for a few casts of the iron raised Clinton's lifeless corpse !

Like the body of the sweet victim who lay beside him, no indication of violence was visible on the soldier's. His uniform was uninjured, and not a button torn away. Death had not been inflicted by a plunderer ; for a valuable ring was on the finger, and a watch and note-case in the pocket when the body was recovered. The hat alone was wanting ; and on the following day it was found in a millpond, whither it had been carried by the stream.

The whole affair was involved in a deep and impenetrable mystery. There were no marks upon the bodies—no traces of a recent struggle visible on the river-bank. The night had not been so dark, that the unhappy couple could have accidentally fallen in ; and if they had, Clinton was an excellent swimmer. That Agnes had any acquaintance with the drowned soldier, beyond what his calling often at the shop pro-

duced, was unknown to her friends and family. On searching her drawers no letter or note was found; and Clinton's private papers, many of them billet-doux, threw no light upon the transaction. There was one sealed packet of considerable size found in his writing-desk, with an endorsement, "To be burned when I am dead"—and in accordance with the wish expressed upon the envelope, it was immediately committed to the flames.

It was also a strange circumstance that nobody

of the beautiful Agnes elicited from all who had seen or known her. At the inquest nothing was elicited connected with the cause of their deaths; and the bodies, followed by an immense concourse, were conveyed away. Clinton's, of course, was carried to the barrack, and that of the gentler sufferer was removed to the dwelling of her kindred.

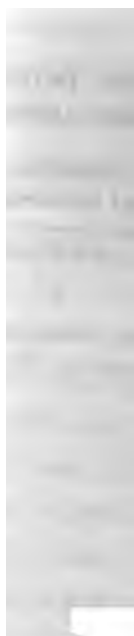
By a strange accident the funerals occurred at the same time, and the processions crossed each other. One, with the unpretending simplicity of the sect she belonged to, seemed stealing quietly from the scenes of busy life, to seek that "end of all men"—the grave. The other, accompanied by all the parade that marks the interment of a soldier—the dead march pealing from the band—the firing party before the coffin—the regiment following with slow and measured step—moved to the cathedral, in whose cemetery Clinton's last resting-place had been prepared. The service of the dead was ended—thrice the volley of his own company rolled over their departed


comrade—the earth rattled on the escutcheon that bore his name—the grave was filled—the music of the dead changed to a merry quick-step—and Clinton, in military parlance, was forgotten!

“And,” asked a young lieutenant, “was that foul and fearful deed never brought to light?”

“Never”—replied O'Connor. “With the dead themselves the secret appeared to rest. Many years have since passed over, and nothing has ever transpired which could solve the

save the deep breathing of those who occupied the bivouac. It told that those it sheltered were sleeping more soundly on their truss of straw, than many a careworn head which pressed a downy pillow.





ENTRANCE INTO FRANCE — BATTLES OF
THE BIDASSOA AND THE NIVELLE.

Night closed around the conqueror's way,
And lightnings show'd the distant hill,
Where those who fought that dreadful day,
Stood few and faint, but fearless still!

* * * * *

Many a heart that now beats high,
In slumber cold at night shall lie.

MOORE.

CHAPTER V.

ENTRANCE INTO FRANCE—BATTLES OF
THE BIDASSOA AND THE NIVELLE.

AT midnight, on the 6th of October, the British divisions got silently under arms. A storm was raging furiously—thunder was pealing round them—lightning in quick and vivid flashes flared across the murky sky—the elemental uproar was reverberated among the Alpine heights—and a wilder night was never chosen for a military operation. Gradually the tempest exhausted its fury—the wind fell—the rain ceased—an overwhelming heat succeeded, and when the morning

broke, the leading brigades, at seven different points, plunged into the Bidassoa; while a rocket rose from the ancient steeple of Fontarabia, and the signal was answered by a combined movement from the heights, of all the divisions there drawn up in order of battle.

Perfect success crowned this daring essay. The leading columns were nearly across the river before the French fire opened. Ground difficult and broken in itself, had been carefully strengthened with numerous field-works; but all gave

self, and awaited the fall of Pamplona, which Soult's repeated defeats rendered inevitable. The garrison still obstinately held out; and when their provisions were nearly exhausted, it was rumoured that they intended, rather than surrender, to blow up the works, and take their chance of escaping. But an assurance from the Spanish commander, Don Carlos, that should the place be destroyed, he would hang the governor and officers, and decimate the men, prevented the attempt; and on the 30th of October the garrison yielded themselves prisoners of war, and the place surrendered.

Winter was now set in, and a season of unusual severity had commenced. The allies were sadly exposed to the weather, and increased difficulty was felt every day in procuring the necessary supplies. Forage became so scarce, that part of the cavalry had nothing for their horses but grass; while the cattle for the soldiers' rations, driven sometimes from the interior of

Spain, perished in immense numbers by the way, or reached the camp so wretchedly reduced in condition, as to be little better than carrion. Resources from the sea could not be trusted to—the coast was scarcely approachable in blowing weather; and even in the sheltered harbour of Passages, the transports could hardly ride to their moorings, in consequence of the heavy swell that tumbled in from the Atlantic. The cold became intense—sentries were frozen at their posts—and a picket at Roncesvalles regularly snowed up, and saved with great difficulty. All this, and

line of his position, and strengthening his defences, wherever the ground would admit an enemy to approach. The field-works extended from the sea to the river, as the right rested on St. Jean-de-Luz, and the left on the Nivelle. The centre was at La Petite Rhune and the heights of Sarré. The whole position passed in a half-circle through Irogne, Ascain, Sarré, Ainhone, and Espelette. Though the centre was commanded by a higher ridge, a narrow valley interposed between them. The entire front was covered with works, and the sierras defended by a chain of redoubts. The centre was particularly strong, as a regular work, ditched and palisaded, protected it.

To turn the position, by advancing Hill's corps through St. Jean Pied-de-Port, was first determined on; but on consideration, this plan of operations was abandoned, and strong as the centre was, Wellington resolved that on it his attack should be directed, while the heights of Ainhone,

which formed its support, should, if possible, be carried simultaneously.

A commander less nerved than Wellington, would have lacked resolution for this bold and masterly operation. Every thing was against him—every chance favoured the enemy. The weather was dreadful—the rain fell in torrents—and while no army could move, the enemy had the advantage of the delay, to complete the defences of a position, which was already deemed to be almost as perfect as art and nature could

son and the plan of the attack arranged. No operation could be more plain or straightforward. The centre was to be carried by columns of divisions, and the right centre turned. To all the corps their respective points of attack were assigned; and to the light division and Longa's Spaniards, the storming of La Petite Rhune was confided. The latter were to be supported by Alten's cavalry, three brigades of British artillery, and three mountain guns.

The 8th had been named for the attack, but the roads were so dreadfully cut up, that neither the artillery nor Hill's brigades could get into position, and it was postponed for two days longer. The 10th dawned, a clear and moonlit morning. Long before day, Lord Wellington and several of the generals of division and brigade, with their respective staffs, had assembled in a small wood, five hundred yards from the redoubt above the village of Sarré, which they only waited for sufficient light to commence attacking.

Nothing could exceed the courage and rapidity with which the troops rushed on and overcame every artificial and natural obstacle. The 3d and 7th divisions advanced in front of the village. Downie's Spanish brigade attacked by the right, while the left was turned by Cole's, and the whole of the first line of defences remained in possession of the allies.

On this glorious occasion the light division was pre-eminently distinguished. By moonlight it moved from the greater La Rhune, and formed in a ravine which separates the bolder from the

est part of the position. Here a momentary check arrested their progress—the supporting force (Spanish) were too slow—the ground too rugged for the horse artillery to get over it with speed. The rifles were attacked in turn, and for a moment driven back by a mass of the enemy. But the reserve came up—again the light troops rushed forward—the French gave way—and the whole of the lower ridge was left in possession of the assailants.

For four hours the combat had raged, and in every point the British were victorious. A more formidable position remained behind, and Wellington combined his efforts for a vigorous attack.

This mountain position extended from Mondarin to Ascain. A long valley, through which the Nivelle flows, traverses it; and as the ground is unequal, the higher points were crowned with redoubts, and the spaces of leveller surface occupied by the French in line or column, as the nature of the ground best admitted. Men in-

clined to fight never had a field that offered so many advantages; and there were none, save the British leader and the splendid army he commanded, who would venture to assault equal numbers, posted as the enemy were.

The dispositions were soon complete — the word was given — and in six columns, with a chain of skirmishers in front, the allies advanced to the attack.

To carry a strong work, or assail a body of infantry in close column, placed on the crest of an acclivity that requires the attacking force to

could resist the dash and intrepidity of the British ; and over the whole extent of that formidable position, on no point did the attack fail.

In these operations the allies had 3000 killed and wounded ; while the French were driven from a matchless position, with the loss of 50 pieces of cannon, 1500 prisoners, and some 3500 *hors de combat* !

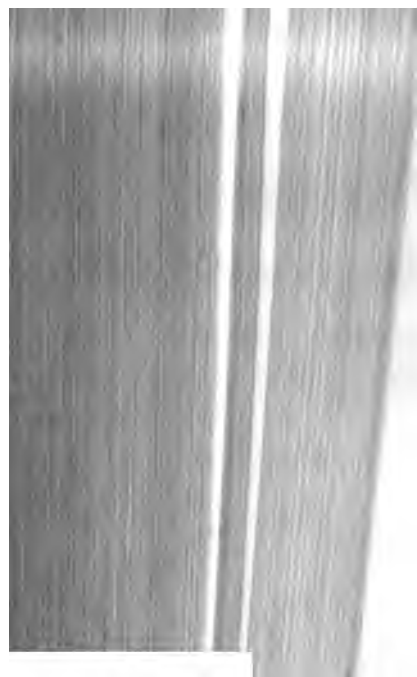
Nearly at the close of the struggle, while the light division were carrying a strong redoubt with a rush ; and when, with their accustomed audacity, they had pushed on against the intrenched enemy as fearlessly as if they had been formed on a plain ; a stouter opposition checked them, and, for the first time, the assailants were stopped by a heavy fire from behind the abattis of the redoubt.


To pause for breath—reattack the intrenchment—one party advancing boldly in front, while the two others in a run dashed forward right and left to turn the work—was but the business of a

moment. In front they leaped over the abattis, on the flanks they jumped into the ditch, and the defenders had scarcely time to escape by the rear.

When forced back by the heavy fire from the intrenchment, O'Connor was wounded in the head, and his companions urged him to retire, and obtain surgical assistance; but he refused to quit the field, and binding a handkerchief over his bleeding temples, led on the second attack. Ever foremost, he cleared the ditch, and sword in hand sprang through the embrasure, as the

longer—his head sank back—but a wild and reiterated huzza rose over the whole surface of the battle-ground, and told that Wellington was again a conqueror!





SICK QUARTERS—DEPRESSION—AN UNEX-
PECTED LETTER.

You look not well, Signor Antonio.

MERCHANT OF VENICE.

No more—no more. Oh! never more on me
The freshness of the heart can fall like dew.

DON JUAN.

She
Grieved, but perhaps her feelings may be better
Shown in the following copy of her letter.

Ibid.



CHAPTER VI.

SICK QUARTERS—DEPRESSION—AN UNEXPECTED LETTER.

A MONTH wore heavily through, and O'Connor continued an invalid, for his wounds healed slowly. To one of his energetic disposition, a state of inactivity was most disagreeable; and when every courier that arrived brought fresh details of Wellington's triumphant advance, the disabled soldier began to loathe the confinement of sick quarters, and execrate the evil fortune which prevented his sharing in those proud actions that for a time closed the glorious roll of British victory—Orthez and Toulouse.

(3) Local circumstances increased these repinings, which indisposition had engendered. The monotony of a place filled with sick men, and that too a wretched hamlet in the Pyrenees—dull, comfortless, and deserted—was heart-sinking to a spirit that, till now, had never been absent when daring deeds were doing. Every face he looked on was marked with some sad traces of disease—every one he encountered in his sombre walk seemed afflicted with premature decrepitude. If he remained within, O'Connor was obliged to witness the sufferings of his brave companions—

No wonder then that the soldier's firmness began to fail, and gloomy forebodings tormented him. While every day teemed with brave adventure, he who had been foremost in the gallant throng remained cooped in a mountain hamlet, with no occupation left but to contemplate the varied forms which human suffering can assume !

In the fever of war—in the phrensied excitement of a campaign, where battle followed close on battle—the failure of his suit to Mary Howard had been half forgotten. He thought of her in secret ; but a succession of daring operations and sparkling scenes of victory, dispelled uneasy musings, and softened the painful memory of his disappointment. But now in the silence of a sick room, or the solitude of a lonely ramble, the image of the lost-one returned with poignant vividness. Vainly he taxed his firmness—vainly he summoned resolution, and strove to “pluck from the memory” a recollection that, in his present irritable mood, stung him almost to madness. Alas ! the arrow was at his heart ; and

sleeping or waking, Mary Howard engrossed his thoughts.

It was strange too, that, though so long from England, no intimation of Mary's marriage had reached him. Letters, no doubt, miscarried frequently; but eight months had elapsed since the rifle detachment had marched from Ashfield; and whether his lost love had become the wife of another or still remained unwedded, was wrapped in doubt.

Still, even this uncertainty afforded at times a mournful pleasure. Though lost to him, it would

Howard's heart might have been his ; and with a nameless feeling from which his pride revolted, he clung to a lover's hope, and augured, from an announcement of her marriage having never reached him, that Phillips had forfeited her regard, and even yet that he and Mary should be happy.

The dulness of the Pyrenean hamlet was rendered more intolerable from a scarcity of books, or of any thing besides, that could divert the tedium of a wet day. A volume of Gil Blas—two or three monkish directories—and a Racing Calendar, found in the saddle-bags of a dead dragoon, formed the whole library of the cantonment. Sometimes a mutilated newspaper reached the *détenue*, and most frequently it came thither, wrapping some package that had arrived from England. A trunk that had for months been following an officer, now among the wounded, found him in this miserable retirement. It contained a general refit, despatched to the sick man

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amusing; and O'Connor took up the last fragment, wondering at the interest which a torn newspaper possessed among the Pyrenees.

He would have been happier had he passed that fragment by unheeded. It was a scrap from the Morning Post. Ere his eye rested a second on the paper, his cheek turned pale—his brow compressed itself—and his hand trembled. There he found a paragraph, among some others containing the idle gossip of the day. Though names were not mentioned, the soldier was at no loss to understand who the parties were to whom it alluded. It stated that “the dashing Captain P——, who had recently left the rifles for the — light dragoons, and whose antipathy to the Peninsula had occupied the attention of both fashionable and military coteries, had solved the mystery last week, by eloping with a village beauty. The fugitives had headed northward—and the old vicar of A——d was inconsolable.”

The paper fell from O'Connor's grasp. Mary Howard was lost to him for ever—Mary Howard

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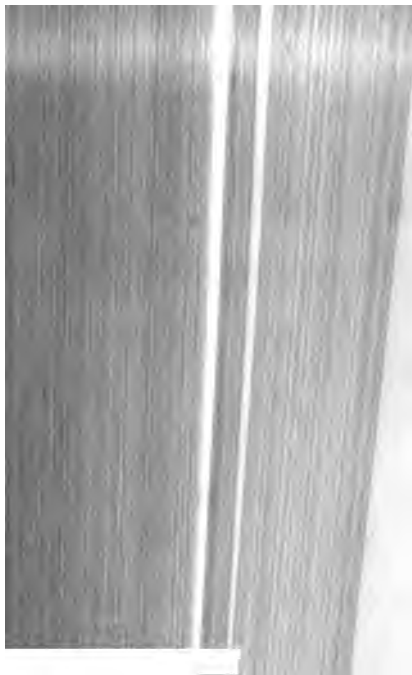
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dejected—and he who had been once regarded as a man who set fortune at defiance, appeared sinking beneath a fixed depression that none could account for—as none could guess the cause. The gazette, issued after the battle of Orthes, reached the isolated cantonment of the wounded, and O'Connor was in the list, a lieutenant-colonel. He seemed to read his promotion with indifference, and the wonder of those about him was redoubled.

Toulouse was fought. Soult made a last and desperate essay to arrest the British general in his victorious career; but that unnecessary expenditure of human life ended in a signal defeat, and added another laurel to the conqueror's wreath. An armistice, followed by a total cessation of hostilities, immediately succeeded. The Bourbons were restored, and Napoleon abdicated the throne of France to assume the mockery of royalty in Elba.

At this period a medical officer of superior rank visited the outlying sick and wounded, who had



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health became rapidly established, and, better still, his mental quietude was once more restored. He now had schooled his heart to submission, and learned to think of Mary Howard as of one dead to him altogether. Of her total alienation no doubt remained, and consequently idle hopes no longer obtruded themselves. O'Connor's cheerfulness returned; and, to the delight of many of his old companions whom he occasionally encountered on the road, the gallant colonel became "himself again."

He had been at this period four months a rambler, and only awaited the arrival of despatches he expected from England, to quit Rome, leave the continent, and turn his steps towards home. The packet came—he broke the seal impatiently—it contained several letters from his agent; but what astonished him deeply was to find in the parcel one in the well-remembered handwriting of his lost Mary. He unclosed it with a trembling hand—and his surprise increased while he read the following lines:

"I have seen two events noticed in the papers, which have given me pain and pleasure—your name in the return of the wounded, and afterwards in the gazette, which contained the list of promotions after the battle of Toulouse. For some weeks I remained extremely wretched, until a paragraph in the Times relieved my anxiety, by noticing you among those who were stated to be convalescent. I trust the health of my dear and valued friend is now completely re-established, and that his native air, to which the newspapers mention him as about to return, will effect a speedy cure, if such be not already completed.

Phillips have never met since I quitted my parent's house, and consented to what, under ordinary circumstances, would have been indelicate—a hurried and irregular marriage. But a stern necessity required this sacrifice of feeling. I owed it to my husband, and I submitted.

“I am not well—and to *you* I should blush to confess it—*I am not happy*. Residing among strangers—estranged from my beloved father—the absences of Phillips are become longer every time he leaves me. Military duty calls him frequently away; and, as he says, the regiment is far too dissipated to permit me to accompany him to head-quarters. Yet this to me, strange as I am to worldly etiquette, appears most singular; for the colonel's wife and several ladies beside, are constantly resident with their husbands.

“When we meet, O'Connor, I will open my whole heart to you. I am miserable—depressed—overwhelmed with horrible forebodings—doubts

which I dare scarcely think of, and which my hand could never trace on paper. Possibly my situation dispirits me, and I harass myself with vain fears. God grant that it may be so!—and I shall be too happy!

“Ere you arrive in England I shall in all probability have become a mother. If life is spared in that approaching trial—come to me. I have no bosom in which to confide my fears and sorrows but one—and that is yours—my more than brother!”

“Farewell, dear O'Connor. I am so weak and nervous, that you will scarcely decipher what

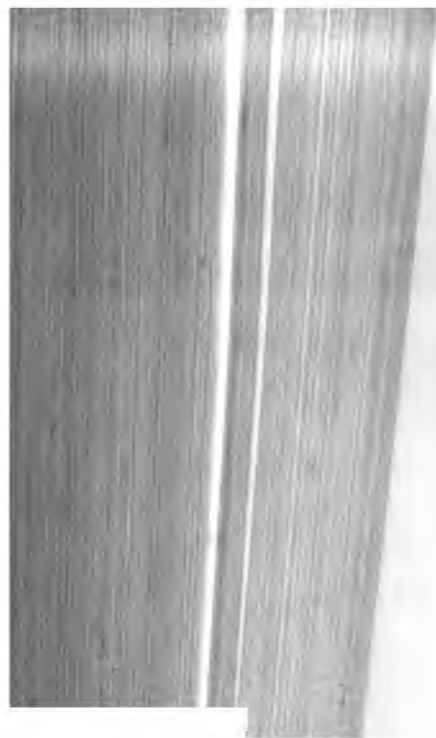
darkened and a flush came over his pale cheek. He folded it again, and placed it in his pocket-book.


“Yes, Mary, I will be with thee. Under all this mystery attendant on his marriage, Phillips has some villany concealed. Where was the necessity for an elopement? Why not present Mary to his regiment? The scoundrel means her false; and she, poor artless dupe, at last suspects him. Let me see.” He took the letter out, and examined the date and postmarks. It was written two months since, and had followed him from place to place, until it found him at Rome. The delay was most vexatious. What would Mary think? No deliverer appearing—and even her appeal for months unnoticed. O’Connor summoned his servant, and issued orders for an immediate departure.

“Mary,” he said, “I may not be able to redress thy wrongs, but I can avenge them. If that false villain has abused thy confidence, his

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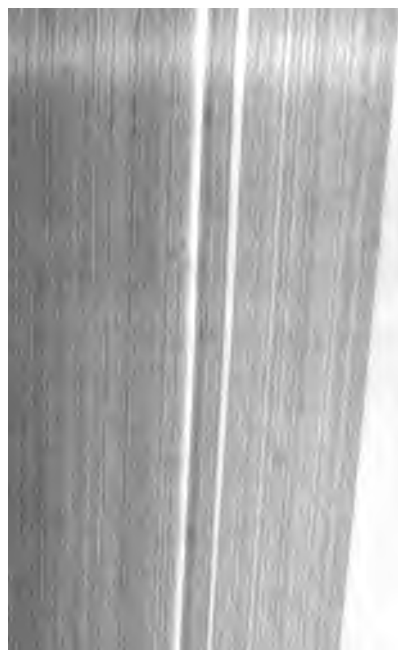




ARRIVAL IN LONDON—A SCOUNDREL'S
VILLANY CONFIRMED.

OPHELIA. I hope all will be well. We must be patient:
but I cannot choose but weep. My brother
shall know of it.

HAMLET.



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CHAPTER VII.

ARRIVAL IN LONDON.

No accident interrupted the colonel's journey, and in a shorter time than could have been anticipated, he reached the British metropolis and drove to a west-end hotel. The evening was far advanced—he despatched a hasty dinner—and having inquired the direction of the obscure street where his still-beloved Mary resided, he determined to set out at once and find her without delay.

While waiting for a coach, he threw his eyes carelessly over a morning paper; and with considerable satisfaction, read in the list of arrivals at

a neighbouring hotel, the name of his gallant countryman O'Brien, now, and most deservedly, a major.

The address that Mary had given him in her long-delayed letter, was to a newly-built row of houses in the vicinity of the Regent's Park. Half an hour's driving brought him to the place; and having discharged the coach at the end of the street, he walked slowly down to find the number of the house.

From the appearance of the buildings and the remoteness of the situation—none of the numerous streets and terraces which environ the Park

window save one in the basement story, and after pausing for a minute to collect his thoughts, he knocked gently at the door. The candle disappeared from the room below—then beamed through the fanlight of the hall—and a woman's voice next moment inquired who he was, and what he wanted? On asking for Mrs. Phillips, the door was instantly unclosed; and the owner of the house, a decent and elderly person, held the light up to examine the features of the late visiter. Accidentally, the cloak in which he had wrapped himself fell back from O'Connor's face. The woman screamed—"Can it be possible?" she exclaimed. "Good God! it is her long-expected brother!" She invited the stranger to come in—closed the hall-door—and conducted him into a clean but plainly-furnished parlour.

"Alas! colonel"—she continued—"It is no wonder I was astonished. I never expected to have seen you—nor did the dear lady herself. For many a weary week she looked daily for a letter from abroad; and when any was delivered

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“ Alas ! it is sorry tidings for a brother. She is gone home to”—and she paused.

“ Go on—go on—for God’s sake.”

“ To die !”

“ Die !—Oh, no—impossible ! She was in all the bloom of youth, and health was painted on her rosy cheek, when I left her but a year ago.”

“ Ah ! that year I suspect has done the mischief, sir. I fear, poor lady, health and happiness during that short period were lost.”

“ But when did she go ?—where to ?—with whom ? Speak—I am in torture !”

“ Her father—God pity him, poor old man !—came for her about ten days ago. They set out by easy stages for his vicarage in a carriage, and the nurse and baby, with her trunks, went by the mail. A strange dark-complexioned woman, who visited her constantly when Captain Phillips was away—and latterly he was seldom here—travelled with her as a nurse-tender !”

“ A dark woman !”

“ Ay—dark as a gipsy ; but she was too hand-

some and well-dressed to be one. I suppose she was some foreigner."

"Was the lady long your lodger?"

"Nearly six months. She came here a fortnight before her confinement. The captain took the lodgings."

"Her confinement. Is the child living?"

"Yes—and a lovely boy as ever eyes looked upon. He was baptized by her father, at the poor lady's request, the day before they left. It was, alas! a melancholy christening. I thought I would never weep so much, but I could not help it; for the mother, while the babe was named,

“Willingly, colonel. I need hold nothing back from you; for it is already written to you by the lady.”

“Written.”

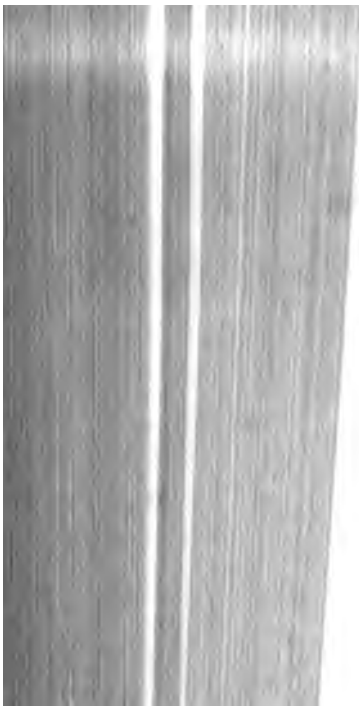
“Ay—I have the letter locked up in my desk, and will give it to you presently.”

“Well, your tale, my good friend. All that befel my sister—keep nothing from me.”

“I will not indeed, colonel”—and taking a chair, the hostess thus continued:

“It was in the beginning of winter that Captain Phillips drove here in a hackney-coach, and looked at the lodgings. He inquired particularly if they were very private; and on my assuring him that they were, at once engaged them. Two days afterwards he came here with your sister; and here the dear lady continued until she left this, I fear, for the grave.” The good-hearted woman burst into tears, and the soldier was deeply affected. Presently she resumed her story:

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surprising them together—for during the last six weeks that she remained here, he never was in this house but once.

“That once I shall never forget ; for that dreadful visit will cause the lady’s death. God forgive me if I wrong him ! She had only left her room a few days—of course she was weak and nervous, and little able to support the interview that followed. The captain came ; and as he did always when intending to remain, he sent his gig and servant away. They dined—he appeared unusually agreeable ; and she, poor thing, happier than I had for a long time observed her. An hour afterwards a wild shriek startled me ! I was sitting in the apartment underneath this one—ran up in terror—and on the stairs encountered Captain Phillips. He passed me—flung the hall door open, and ran down the street as if a robber were behind him. The shriek was again repeated—the lady’s attendant called loudly for assistance—I flew to the drawing-room, and found your sister in convulsions. Her sufferings,

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that the packet came from his lost love, the device upon the seal would have been sufficient. It was the impression of an antique ring that he had found buried in the sands when assisting the engineers in throwing up a field-work in Egypt, and which, in happier days, he had prevailed on Mary to accept. The landlady lighted another candle, and would have retired from the room to leave the soldier to peruse his beloved one's epistle—but O'Connor hesitated to break the envelope; and he who had led a storming party to the breach, trembled to unclosethe a lady's letter.

He bade the good woman a hasty farewell—threw himself into the coach—returned to the hotel—retired to his room—locked the door—and there read the ruin of the most spotless victim who ever fell a sacrifice to the machinations of a heartless profligate!



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MEMOIR OF A RUINED BEAUTY.

A tale so sad ! a maid of noble birth
By solemn vows seduced—abandoned—left
To shame and anguish !

* * * * * *

He was a villain !

Prayers, sighs, tears, oaths—nothing was spared to win her.
She listened and believed.

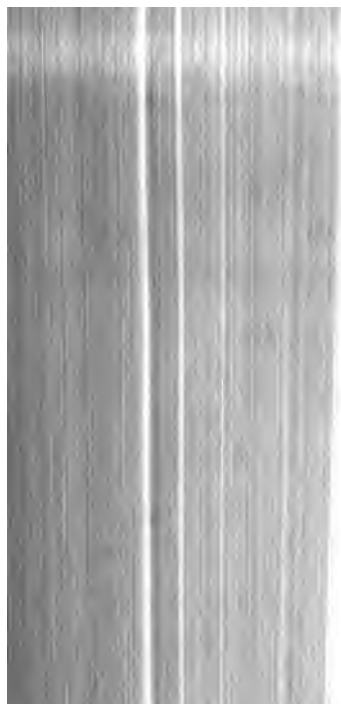
* * * * * *

ADELGITHA. I'll meet him—
Sink at his feet—bathe them with tears—implore him
To spare a ruined wretch ; and if he spurns
Me and my griefs—

CLAUDIA. What wilt thou then ?

ADELGITHA. Die !—die, Claudia, die !

M. G. LEWIS.



CHAPTER VIII.

MEMOIR OF A RUINED BEAUTY.

My hand trembles—at times my purpose fails—and I know not how to begin the sad and disgraceful disclosure. I have waited week after week for an answer to my letter. None came—and you are dead, or I deemed worthless. O'Connor, you shall never know what I felt after you had left me. That secret goes with me to the grave, and, with my imprudence, both will be there shortly forgotten.

I have a strong conviction that we shall never meet in this world, though Ellen assures me that we shall; and I cannot go to another and a better

Being, without assuring you, my valued friend, that in all save worldly experience I have nothing with which to reproach myself—and I have, alas! been sinned against, and sinning.

* * * * *

I am weaker to-day. Two things alone require an explanation—my marriage, and my abandonment. While strength lasts I must make effort, and give you a brief detail of both.

After your embarkation, Phillips visited my father's, an acknowledged and accepted suitor. None could be more ardent—none more

to hint my suspicions. He seemed mortified; but by degrees admitted that my fears were true, and promised to repose full confidence in me on the morrow.

We strolled out next day—turned into a retired forest-walk—and there Phillips freely unbosomed himself. He had an old and singularly-tempered uncle. He was dying—the disease hopeless—a few months must bring him to the grave—and Phillips was heir to his large estates. It was the old man's fancy that his successor should form a titled alliance. Phillips had evaded matrimony hitherto, and he endeavoured to amuse the dying invalid with hopes which probably he should never live long enough to see overturned. His actions, he added, were vigilantly observed—he had grasping kinsmen jealous of the regard the old man evinced, and they would gladly seize any opportunity to ruin him with his wealthy relative. Our marriage, he feared, would afford the desired means. He cared not for himself. Of

that he had already given the strongest proof, by quitting his regiment rather than leave the woman he adored, and thus exposing himself to the most offensive imputations that could be attached to a soldier's name. This he had endured without a murmur; and he was prepared now to sacrifice his brilliant prospects, and show how ardent and disinterested his love was. I listened to him with pain. I had no fortune—and Phillips's passion for me must cost him a rich inheritance. I urged him to postpone our marriage, and wait until circumstances would admit our union taking place, without the ruin-

and as if a ray of hope flashed across his mind, his eyes brightened, and he exclaimed—"Yes, Mary, there is a chance—nay, a certainty of averting the ruin which the old man's anger would entail upon us. Mary, I must prove your love. Dare you trust yourself with him who so devotedly adores you; and, waving for a month or two a public ceremonial, wed me privately?"

I started! "Oh—no, no, Phillips. I will share your poverty, if poverty is to be the price of loving; but if I consented to such a step, even you would afterwards despise me."—"Oh, Mary!" he replied, "how little do you know my heart. Were it possible that the feelings with which I regard you could be increased, that confidence would make me love you more devotedly." Why, O'Connor, weary you with the pleadings of specious artifice. I yielded a reluctant consent, and on the third night set off for Scotland with the deceiver.

We travelled rapidly for two days, and reached the frontier safely. There was no one to inter-

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parent that I had yielded to necessity alone, and that my filial affection was unchanged and unchangeable.

We arrived in London, and the same consideration that rendered a private marriage indispensable, required us to live in the strictest retirement. To every wish that Phillips expressed, I submitted without a murmur. We resided in obscure lodgings, and excepting when we walked into the fields in the evening, or visited the theatres closely muffled up, I never left the house. This change from the life of exercise which I had previously led, began to affect my health; but I kept it from my husband, and waited patiently until the necessity for all concealment should terminate.

That time came. Phillips had been away for a week, and every post brought fresh excuses for his absence. No letter came that day, and of course I expected him at night; and while I counted the hours until he should arrive, I strove to while them away by reading. An evening

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wronged the being who had loved "not wisely, but too well," he became reserved, and sometimes peevish and unkind. The slightest allusion to our marriage, any expression of surprise at the continued concealment in which we lived, irritated and annoyed him; and, before my child was born, he appeared happy when any excuse offered him a plea for being absent.

I was confined—my baby saw the light—no father prayed beside his daughter's couch—no husband cheered her sinking spirits during the hour of suffering. Alas! alas! the truth was too apparent—I was no longer an object of the love of him who ruined me!

* * * * *

Feeble—and feebler still—my trembling fingers now hold a pen with difficulty. I am hastening to the grave; and when you return to England, O'Connor, the narrow house will be my abiding-place.

I should have sank under my afflictions, or lost my reason, had not an humble, but faithful

friend, watched over me as a mother tends a dying infant—that person was Ellen the gipsy. She seldom left me—when I desponded she cheered me up—and when I abandoned hope and became nearly crazed, she placed my infant starved baby in my arms, and asked me, would I repay his innocent smiles by robbing him of his mother. She seemed to possess a spell which roused me in my lowest mood, and almost reconciled me to life.

* * * * *

Three weeks had passed—Phillips had been all that time with his regiment, if one or two

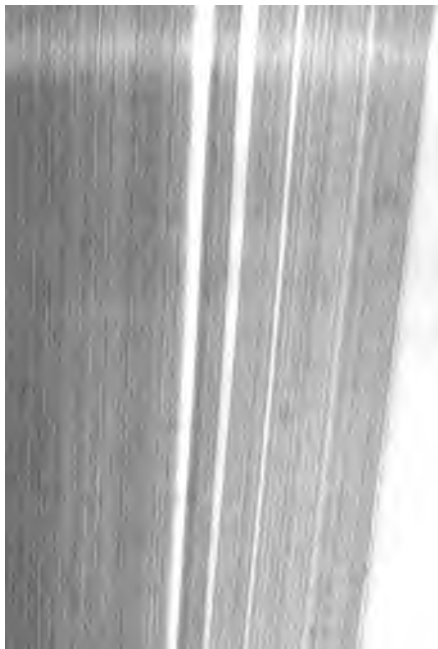
knocked—the maid brought up a letter—it was from my husband, and couched in much warmer terms than those in which his notes had latterly been worded—it intimated his intention of being with me that day for dinner.

Ellen read the billet over. She looked at me—perused the letter again—and muttered, “Too kind to be sincere—lady, be firm—prepare for a surprise—and it may not be one from which pleasure comes.”

“I cannot be more wretched, Ellen, than I am. Let it come—I am too miserable to heed it.”

The gipsy shook her head; and, as she hated Phillips, left the house immediately.

He came—I heard his step upon the stairs—my heart beat violently—but, oh! how different the feeling was from the throb of delight with which, a few months since, I listened for a lover’s return! He kissed me tenderly—asked for *our* boy—took the child in his arms—



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“ Alas ! Phillips, I have suffered much ; but could I only reclaim that truant heart of thine, no allusion to the past should ever escape my lips, and I would think of nothing but the joyous change that had again replaced me in the affections of an alienated husband.”

“ Ah ! Mary,” he said, “ I have been apparently unkind ; but I, too, have been unhappy. I have destroyed myself by play, and nothing but one act can save me from perdition. You are the arbitress of my fate !”

“ *I!* say, what can I do ? We must live humbly, Phillips. Ah ! I partly understand you. These lodgings are too expensive”—

“ Damnation !” he exclaimed. “ No, no, Mary. I’ll change you to a residence more fitted for beauty like yours to dwell in—a carriage—an establishment—every thing which that gentle heart can long for—all shall be yours !”

I stared at him, and shuddered. I feared that misfortune had unsettled his brain. A

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"The world believe," he continued carelessly, "that we are not wedded."

"Oh God! how dreadful must that suspicion be to you. How insulting, Phillips, to know, that the reputation of a stainless wife, the legitimacy of a guiltless infant, are questioned from the necessity of a clandestine ceremony!"

"Mary, you have made one sacrifice—*another* would render me the happiest of men; for it will enable me to place you, where beauty and gentleness like yours deserve to be—in luxury and splendour."

"I cannot comprehend your meaning, Phillips."

"Hear me calmly, Mary"—and he appeared to be making a strong effort to gain courage for an embarrassing explanation. "I am, as I have told you, ruined. I have play-debts in themselves of no great amount—but to me, without any resource to meet them, destructive as if they

reached above the income of a monarch. One of those dull creatures, chosen by the blind caprice of fortune to bear the weight of wealth, has fancied me as the person on whom she would lavish her riches; and no barrier stands between me and a noble independence, but our hasty and irregular engagement."

I nearly fainted; but I held up, and strove to sustain my sinking strength.

"Hasty and irregular engagement!" I replied. "Mean you our marriage by that term, Phillips?"

"Ay—if you please to call it so."

rushed upon my mind, and I passionately exclaimed—"Who?—who performed the —"

Phillips mustered resolution to unmask the whole.

"A broken billiard-marker was the priest, my own servant the witness, and you and I, Mary, are free as air!"

I remember nothing more—a wild shriek burst from me—darkness shut every object out—I tottered, and fell upon the carpet!

* * * * *

I recovered my senses. Ellen plucked me from the jaws of death, and for my deserted baby's sake I strove to live. I wrote to Phillips. The letter was, I suppose, the effusion of a mind half crazed—and a cool and guarded reply was returned. It spoke of "our engagement" as "a foolish affair," and professed a readiness on the writer's part to settle a comfortable annuity on me, and a fitting provision on the infant. This insult almost brought me to the grave. Again I rallied—again I wrote to my destroyer.



The appeal was to his feelings, and humbly worded, as the supplication of a wretch who begs a moment's respite from the headsman. The answer—for one was sent—told me that our correspondence must cease—that in another month he should be married—assured me that my father was ready to receive me with open arms, and confessed that he had intercepted the numerous letters which the heart-broken old man had written.

* * * * *

I wrote to my parent. Ellen guided my hand, for I was too nervous, without assistance, to

and I shall set out with my heart-broken father, to die beneath the roof where years of peace and innocence glided calmly by. You will scarcely read my writing—nerves and strength momentarily grow weaker. Now, O'Connor, I have to prefer my last—my dying request. My boy in a few days will be motherless; and, worse than honest-born orphanage, the stain of illegitimacy will be affixed upon his guiltless name. Will you, for my sake, forget the father, and protect the child?

* * * * *

He is named after you, and to-morrow I set out for the vicarage. Phillips is on a visit with his bride's brother, not forty miles from Ashfield! Is not this unfeeling? They are to be married in a fortnight. Another week or two would have seen me in the grave, and surely he might have waited for that! No matter—a little longer, and my earthly trials shall have ended.

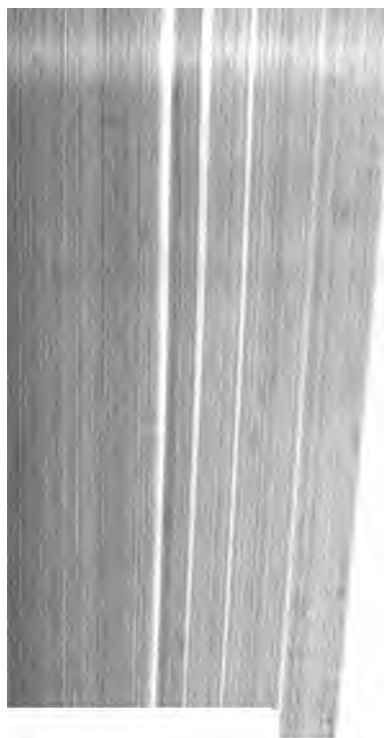
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“O'Connor, farewell. The last blessing of

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THE HOUSE OF DEATH.

GUISCARD. Why weep, and hide thy face?
Turn to thy Guiscard—turn to him who loves thee.

ADELGITHA. Thou lov'st me! Oh! repeat those
blessed sounds!

GUISCARD. Canst thou doubt my love?

ADELGITHA. *Still* lov'st me—*Still!*
Pronounce that word—"Still! still!"

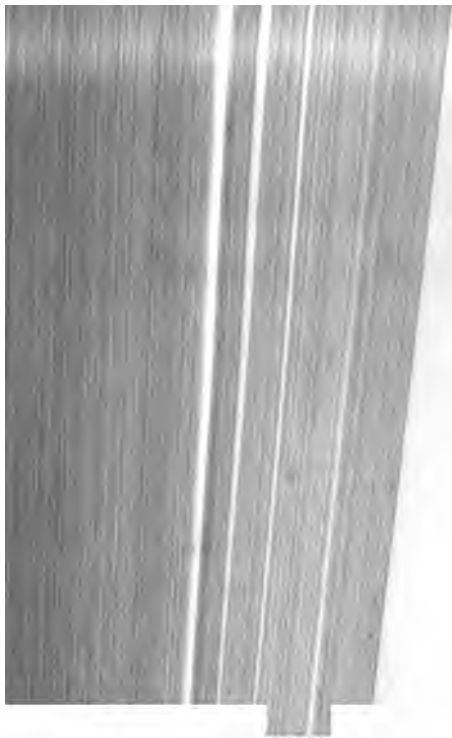
M. G. LEWIS.



CHAPTER IX.

THE HOUSE OF DEATH.

A FINE spring evening had set in, when a chaise and four horses were seen descending the long hill, over which the London road to Ashfield passes. The pace at which the drivers went was unusually fast, and a few minutes would bring them to the end of their journey, if the village was the intended resting-place. Suddenly the postboys pulled up—a traveller left the carriage—and while his companion kept his seat, and proceeded towards the inn, the stranger walked forward, and turning off the

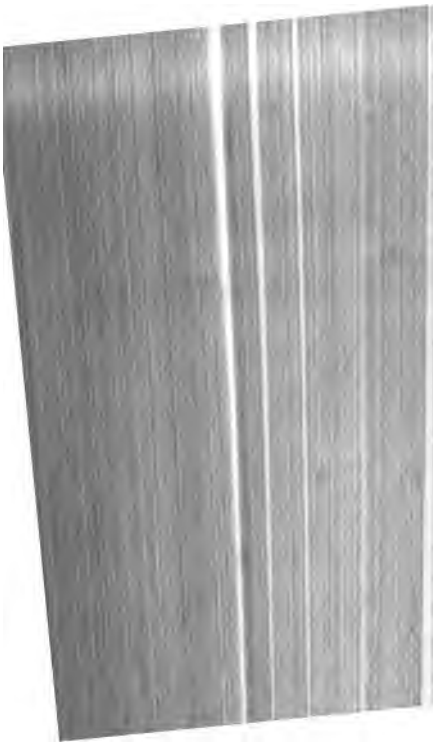


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the soldier's cloak, and, gliding into an adjoining room, beckoned him to follow.

The meeting between O'Connor and the gipsy—for these were the persons—was affectionate as it was melancholy. Ellen leaned upon his shoulder; and, while her dark eyes were moist with sorrow, she informed him that Mary Howard was in the last extremity, and that the heart which he had sought so ardently, in a few hours would cease to throb. Not a shadow of hope existed—the sufferer's strength was sinking momentarily; but, though the frame was feeble, her mental energies were unimpaired, and, in perfect consciousness of approaching dissolution, she awaited “the spirit's parting from its house of clay,” with all the holy calmness of an expiring martyr.

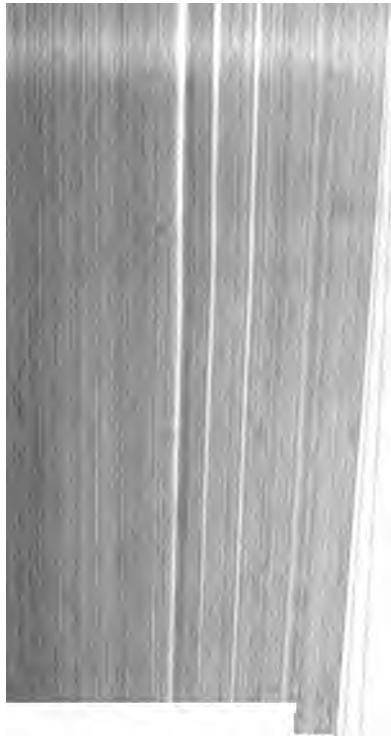
From the commencement to the close of her illness, the gipsy mentioned that she had spoken incessantly of her rejected lover. He appeared the engrossing object of her whole thoughts; and when she wished that the span of existence



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rupted—a female servant whispered him to follow her. Silently he ascended the stairs—the maid opened a chamber-door—and pointing to a chair within, signed to the stranger that he should enter and sit down.

It was the apartment in which Mary Howard was dying. The light was partially obscured, and the disposition of the bed-curtains such, as to enable O'Connor, unseen himself, to look upon the faded countenance of the lost one. Her father had just risen from his knees, where he had been engaged in silent prayer; and the gipsy stood beside the bed, with her dark and brilliant eyes bent upon the sufferer, as if to watch the expected change that was to harbingering immediate dissolution. One thing struck O'Connor as remarkable; though the voice was weak and tremulous, and the delivery of what she uttered unusually slow, every syllable that passed the lips of the dying beauty was distinct and audible.



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“ No, no, Ellen, I have more strength than you all suppose. I would only consign my boy to his protection, and bid him a last farewell. Where is he? Is he in the village?”

“ He is near you, Mary; and only waits until you are calm enough to see him.”

While this short and painful scene was passing, O'Connor's emotion became far too powerful to be suppressed. Tears stole down his sunburnt cheeks, and a stifled sob escaped involuntarily. The quick ear of the dying girl heard it.

“ Hush!” she said; “ that convulsive sigh came not from a woman's bosom. Art thou near me, O'Connor?”

The gipsy gave a signal that he might approach—the soldier moved softly forward, and sank down beside the bed, to prevent sudden surprise. He took the attenuated hand that lay upon the coverlet gently in his own, while the gipsy bent over the village beauty, and

whispered that her long-expected brother was kneeling beside her.

“Ha! Ellen. Is the hand that holds mine his?”

“Yes, dearest. Did I not tell you he was near thee?”

“How happy then shall my last moments be!” she said with animation. “Edward, come round, that I may see you better. Fear nothing, Ellen, I will be calm—indeed I will. I am far stronger than you all believe me.”

O'Connor obeyed her wish, and placed himself on a chair beside her. The old man wrung

“Open the curtains, Ellen, and let me see that face which I prayed so fervently to look on ere I died.”

She was obeyed, while O'Connor leaned over her pillow, and gently laid his lips to hers. She fixed her eyes upon him with a smile, and with her fingers parted the grizzled hair that covered his forehead, and partially concealed the sword-cut that traversed it.

“It is a fearful scar!” she murmured. “Your cheek is darker too; ay, and your hair turned gray. One year, Edward, has changed us both. And did you hasten home, as Ellen says, when you received my long-delayed letter?”

“I did, Mary. I hurried hither to avenge your wrongs, and—”

“What?” she inquired eagerly.

“Take you to this bosom for ever, and prove how imperishable my love was.”

“Oh, no, no, O'Connor. Had I lived, should

I have been an object for a brave man's heart to centre in? I—humbled—debased—deserted—
But you pitied—”

“And loved you, Mary, more tenderly than ever!”

“Then I did not forfeit your good opinion. Thank God! that consolation is left. None save that that Omniscient Being, know how artfully I was beset—how innocently I fell.

She paused—gained fresh strength—and then continued :

“I am dying happily. No care but one re-

across her pallid features. The infant came—and as if in mockery of the scene of death, his rosy cheek was dimpled with a smile, as he gazed around, and looked as if those he saw were happy. The dying mother signed to the nurse to place him in the soldier's arms.

“He is yours, O'Connor. Come let me for the last time kiss the adopted child, and him who has become the orphan's father.”

The soldier stooped down—the infant's lips touched those of Mary Howard.

“Farewell, my boy—farewell, my brother!” she said, in a voice so feeble that it could scarcely be understood. Suddenly her head fell back upon the pillow. The gipsy raised it gently, and whispered, “You are weak, my love!”

No answer was returned—one long deep sigh escaped.

“Help!” exclaimed the soldier. “She is dying!”

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“Mary, my lost one! Before that sun sets a second time, another shall be cold as thou art!”

He said—rushed from the room—and with rapid strides was seen hurrying from the house of death.

The first of these was the fact that the United States had a large and growing population. This was due to a combination of factors, including a high birth rate, immigration from Europe, and the westward expansion of the frontier. The second was the fact that the United States had a large and growing economy. This was due to a combination of factors, including the discovery of gold and silver in the West, the growth of manufacturing in the North, and the expansion of trade with other countries. The third was the fact that the United States had a large and growing military. This was due to a combination of factors, including the need to defend the frontier, the desire to project power in the Pacific, and the desire to maintain a balance of power in the world.

**THE HOUSE OF FEASTING—AN UNWELCOME
VISITER.**

**Ay, seize the present hour! Ere long I'll dash
Your cup of joy with bitter.**

ADELGITHA.

**Birthless villains tread on the neck of the brave and the
long-descended.**

ROB ROY.

Sir, your fortune's ruin'd if you are not married.

SHERIDAN.



CHAPTER X.

THE HOUSE OF FEASTING.

THE scene is changed—the house of mourning is deserted, and where our story passes to there was joy and revelry, for on the third morning the heiress of Bewley Hall was to become a bride.

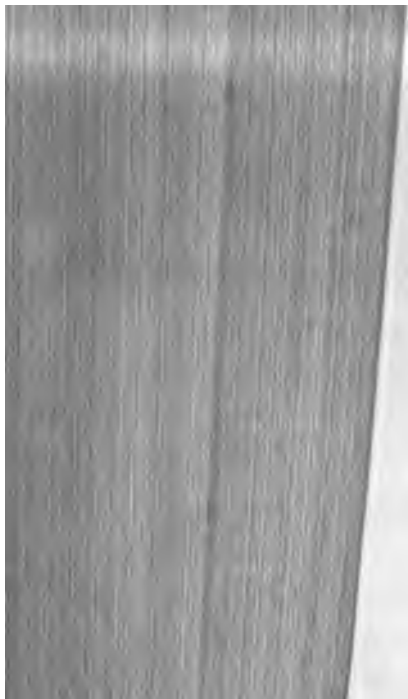
Nothing was talked of for many a mile around, but the splendour and display that was to distinguish this important event. A numerous company had been invited to be present at the ceremony, and a number of the guests had already arrived at the Hall.



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There are alloys generally found even in the most brilliant instances of worldly prosperity. Mr. Harman was vain and ambitious. He had achieved a fortune, and he would fain have been the founder of a family; but he had no son—no male heir to continue his name. He was the father of a daughter. In early life his first worldly advancement was obtained by forming an alliance with the widow of a cotton-planter. She was the offspring of a native woman; and unluckily, the only issue of his marriage, the heiress of Bewley Hall exhibited in features and complexion incontestable evidence of the Indian source from which she was so immediately descended.

Still Mr. Harman might have partially obtained the object he ambitioned, by forming an aristocratic alliance for his daughter. There were enough of poor and sordid titles ready to be bartered for even a portion of his wealth. But in this design he was fated to meet a disappointment. It pleased his daughter to fancy for her husband, a person who had little save fashion and



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crated their friend's good fortune, in obtaining in the hymeneal lottery a prize like the nabob's daughter.

Just then a laced and powdered functionary entered the banquet-room with noiseless step, and whispered in the bridegroom's ear that "the captain was arrived." It would appear that the new comer was both an expected and a welcome visiter, as the dashing hussar apologized for a short absence, and hastened to the library to meet the stranger.

While passing through the lofty hall and lighted corridor, which led to the apartment where the lately arrived guest was waiting for him, Phillips glanced a look of pride and triumph on the splendour that every where was presented to the eye in this house of opulence. The mansion, and all it contained, would at no distant period be his own—fortune was about to heap her favours on him with an unsparing hand—long and ardently had he sighed for wealth—it was already within his grasp—the boldest flight

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Hall, was evidenced in the sumptuous furniture of the library. Books of the rarest and most expensive kinds in superb bindings, filled the cases; and paintings, at ruinous prices, hung thickly round the walls. A large Indian screen was drawn partially across the fireplace. There O'Brien stood; and while the person to whom his untimely visit was intended remained absent, the soldier could not but moralize on the mutability of human fortune which this costly chamber betrayed.

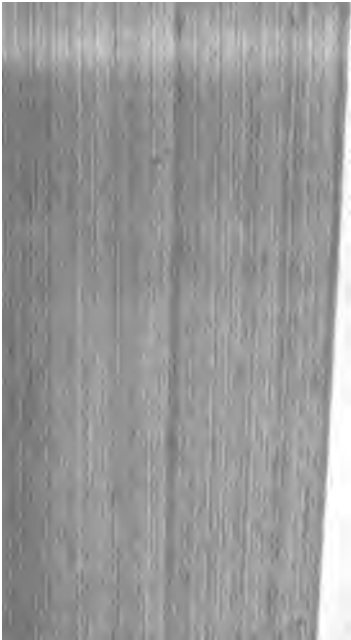
Bewley Hall had been built by a noble earl, who after a long minority, succeeded to large estates, and an immense sum of money accumulated during nonage. His youth had been consumed in travelling, and he came home delighted with every thing foreign, and strongly prejudiced against his native land. The venerable mansion which for centuries had witnessed the births and dissolution of his fathers, was condemned as uninhabitable, and he commenced an edifice for himself.

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But England did not afford sufficient scope for his extravagance. Agents in every city on the continent were engaged in purchasing marbles and paintings, and securing the most expensive relics of antiquity. At every book-sale the rarest portion of the collection fell to the earl's lot; and the very corners of the earth furnished their most curious productions to gratify the fancy of this eccentric individual.

Wealth, however great, may be exhausted; and, in a few years, the immense accumulation of a long minority was expended. But his estates yielded a ready supply; and, if possible, the earl laboured on more vigorously.

Years passed—frequent and heavy supplies had been so unsparingly procured, that at last the princely property would produce no more. The earl was a ruined man; and the hall and its appurtenances—sad memorials of his weakness—were offered for sale; but few could venture to purchase a place on which it was believed more than half a million had been expended. After a



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accident had detained you, and that I, without thy friendly counsel and support, must have faced the parson *solus*, and promised to be virtuous evermore! Ha! Captain O'Brien!" and the colour deserted his cheeks—"This—is—an unexpected pleasure!" as with difficulty he stammered the words out, and held his hand forward. The visiter made no attempt to take it, but replied,

"I fear my late visit will occasion you as little pleasure as it has given me, Captain Phillips. My errand is not a friendly one. We are alone, I hope?"

"Perfectly so:" was the reply, while the lip became pale and tremulous.

"Then, the briefer an unpleasant communication is made," said the soldier, "the better for all. I come from Colonel O'Connor."

"From Colonel O'Connor!" and the name seemed to paralyze him. "And is Colonel O'Connor in England?"

"He is now," returned the Irishman coldly, "waiting my return at the village inn."

"And may I ask what brought him thither?"

"The same errand which recalled him from Italy—to avenge the wrongs of Mr. Howard!"

"I cannot," replied Captain Phillips, "by what right a person totally unconnected with Mr. Howard's family, assumes the office of dressing a lady's wrongs who has a father to protect her."

"To moot that point is not my business; if I might recall to Captain Phillips's recollection

Colonel O'Connor with me? I have done *him* no injury."

"*Done him no injury!* Captain Phillips—can you look me in the face and say so?" and O'Brien sternly fixed his eyes upon the abashed countenance of the trembling villain. "There breathed not upon earth the man who had power to wound my gallant friend save one. You, sir, were that one: and you have wrung Edward O'Connor to the soul."

"I will not affect to misunderstand you, Captain O'Brien."

"I am *Major* O'Brien," rejoined the Irishman haughtily.

"I beg your pardon—your promotion escaped my memory. I comprehend the nature of your errand perfectly, and it is your friend's fault if any indiscretion which I may have committed, shall not be amply atoned for, and the lady and her family satisfied to the utmost extent of their wishes."

He paused—O'Brien bowed—and Phillips again continued :

“ I regret most deeply the unfortunate affair that has occurred ; and I am ready to offer every reparation to Miss Howard but *one*—I cannot marry her.”

“ Indeed ! that would be impossible,” said O'Brien, calmly.

“ I am glad you see it in its true light,” rejoined Phillips—and his face brightened. “ I name any other means by which I may remedy”

“ A ruined reputation,” returned O'Brien with an expression of deep contempt. “ Know

"Indeed? I cannot guess how."

"You need not. I will tell you."

Phillips's looks expressed astonishment.

"Mary Howard is beyond the reach of mortal wants. She is dead!"

"*Dead!*" repeated Phillips. "*Dead!*—it is impossible!"—and he tottered against the mantel-piece for support.

"It is too true, sir," was the cold response. "She is released from sin and suffering. Your victim is at rest. Poor girl—few and evil were the days allotted to her!"

The soldier stooped his head, for feelings unsuited to the purpose of his coming had been excited, and he wished them to be concealed. In a few seconds he turned to the pale and agitated criminal, and with an expression of stern determination, thus continued:

"Captain Phillips, nothing remains for me to do, but simply deliver the message with which I am intrusted. Colonel O'Connor will expect an early meeting."

"It is utterly impossible!" exclaimed Phillips

passionately. "On the second morning I am to be married; after that ceremony is ended, I shall not refuse Colonel O'Connor's message, if he chooses to repeat it."

"I must be candid, Captain Phillips. The meeting must be to-morrow, or, believe me, the ceremony you allude to will never take place. Report whispers that Mr. Harman was not very desirous for the union; and there are documents in my friend's possession, connected with the betrayal of Mary Howard, which shall be exhibited to him before noon. The motive you assigned for marriage, and the feelings you

to frustrate his designs upon his daughter, determined to provide her with a husband, and proposed an alliance between the noble earl whose property he had purchased, and the heiress of Bewley Hall. Phillips accidentally discovered the purport of this secret overture; and by bribing the courier employed on the occasion, managed to substitute another and a very different reply to that which the earl had returned. Piqued at the hauteur and coldness with which a ruined peer rejected the honour of an alliance with his heiress, Harman yielded to his daughter's solicitations, and reluctantly consented to her marrying a commoner, and a man who had neither fortune nor family to recommend him.

So far Phillips had been successful; but until the indissoluble knot was tied he remained in perilous insecurity. The earl's letter had contained a flattering acceptance of the nabob's offer; and intimated his intention of visiting England at an appointed time, which was now rapidly approximating. If he should arrive before

the ceremony took place, the cheat would be discovered and the forgery exposed. Hence the delay of a few days might prove ruinous. With Phillips therefore, all that ambitious profligacy values was at stake; and much as he dreaded a meeting with O'Connor, that desperate alternative alone was left, and he determined to accept the message.

“And is the call of Colonel O'Connor so urgent, so imperative, that a delay of three days cannot be given?” he inquired.

“Captain Phillips,” replied the soldier firmly. “If my friend be not amply satisfied before break-

O'Brien took his hat—Phillips rang the bell—and when a footman answered it, he conducted the unwelcome visiter to the door, and bade him a ceremonious “good night.”

Returning to the library fire, the wretched criminal found leisure for melancholy recollections; and, strange to say, the fate of his murdered victim caused less remorse to the seducer, than dread for the consequences its discovery might occasion.

“Damnation!” he muttered through his clenched teeth. “Had these luckless letters been intercepted, this savage Irishman would have neither heard of Mary’s desertion, nor come back to avenge her injuries. It must be admitted, after all, that she was cruelly betrayed; but death was produced by her own obstinacy. Had she been reasonable, I would have nobly recompensed her disappointment. But to-morrow—it is an infernal risk to run—and nothing but to meet that madman can avert my ruin. Oh! that I could remove him secretly. No, no—the

thing's impossible. I must return to the company, and offer incense to that charmless caste, while the loveliest being I ever wooed won is—I must not even think of it. Courage thyself—fortune or ruin hang on to-morrow's chances."

The hall-bell sounded—the library-door flung open—a stranger was announced. It was the expected guest, Captain Bouverie.



THE DUEL.

•
'Sdeath, I never was in worse humour in all my life!
I could cut my own throat, or any other person's, with the
greatest pleasure in the world!

THE RIVALS.

Every wight has his weird, and we maun a' dee when
our day comes.

ROB ROY.





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CHAPTER XI.

THE DUEL.

WHEN O'Brien returned to the village, he found his companion writing letters in the little parlour, into which they had been inducted on their arrival by the hostess of the inn. As O'Connor listened to the detail which his gallant friend gave of his mission to the Hall, a smile of stern satisfaction flashed for a moment across his melancholy countenance, when the early opportunity a meeting on to-morrow would afford him of avenging Mary Howard's wrongs was announced. He folded his letters, sealed, and despatched them, and then sat down to supper.

To one whose *hardiesse* had been so often and so desperately proved, the hostile rencounter no certain to ensue, would be an affair of slight consideration. That Phillips would evade or decline a meeting altogether, had been the thing he dreaded most; and the assurance which O'Brien gave, that his enemy would not disappoint him, removed that anxiety. While his friend had been absent, O'Connor examined the ground in the immediate vicinity of the hamlet and selected a small enclosure adjoining the churchyard, whose level sward and lofty hedge rendered it a fitting place for the decision of

dation having been peremptorily rejected, Bouverie named five next morning for the hour, and acceded to the paddock selected by O'Connor as the place of meeting. O'Brien anticipated a stronger effort at negotiation; but secret intelligence had reached Phillips that the earl had actually arrived at Paris, *en route* to Bewley Hall; and this determined him rather to meet the man he dreaded, than risk a certain *exposé* which might delay his marriage, and, by delaying, mar his hopes for ever.

Evening wore on, and at a late hour O'Connor and his companion parted. How those, who were to be combatants in the morning passed that night, may be readily conjectured. Sorrow and love—hatred and revenge—racked the bosom of the gallant soldier; while the destroyer of innocence, in that still hour when the torturous sting of conscience is felt most keenly, fancied that the dead beauty in the costume of the grave, was standing before him continually, and taxed him with her ruin. Driven by a desperate alter-

native to abide the challenge of a deadly enemy he trembled at the ordeal of to-morrow; and the haggard expression of his pale and agitated countenance betrayed the secret, when morning dawned, that sleep visits not the guilty.

A day of threatening inclemency was rendered gloomier by a drizzling rain. O'Connor's countenance had been probably as restless as his rival's; but when his friend entered his chamber, he was dressed with customary neatness, and perfectly ready for the field. The expression of his face was serious, almost approaching to sadness; but there was no nervous uneasiness visible—

with which breakfast was ordered in half-an-hour, and post-horses directed to be in readiness to put to, removed every suspicion; and although the place of meeting was within a bow-shot of the inn, no one in the house, when the soldiers strolled carelessly out, dreamed that a deadly rencounter was about to happen.

The church clock was striking five, as O'Connor and O'Brien passed from the high road and crossed the stile. No peasant was astir, for the wet and gloomy morning delayed the earliest within their houses. O'Brien, beneath his military cloak, concealed the pistol-case; and, unseen and unsuspected, the soldiers reached the rendezvous, and waited the coming of their opponents.

Their stay was short—a vehicle was heard approaching—the wheels stopped suddenly—and in a few minutes three men entered the enclosure. Two of them were familiar to those already there; and the third was a surgeon, whom Phillips had engaged for the occasion.

As his rival crossed the stile, the blood rushed

to O'Connor's forehead, and his brows united
a deadly scowl. Instantly that cloud passed
away, and an expression of stern determination
succeeded the hasty ebullition his foe's
appearance had excited for a moment.

The arrangements were not effected with
delay upon the part of Bouverie, as he
objected to O'Brien's proposition of giving a
of pistols to each of the combatants, to
as each pleased after the firing signal had been
pronounced. But in this the latter was inflexible—
the weapons were duly loaded—the distance

by his second showed clearly that O'Connor came to the field determined to destroy his rival, or fall himself; and the only chance by which his own life might be saved, was by taking that of the avenger of Mary Howard. When Bouverie presented the weapons, and Phillips observed the firm and unshaken attitude of his rival—the steady and concentrated look with which he measured him, as if selecting a spot more mortal than another on which to inflict a death-wound, the blood deserted his cheeks—his knees smote each other—and while he took the pistols in his trembling grasp, he whispered in his friend's ear—
“It is all over—I am a dead man!”

The word was given, and each arm was raised. Phillips fired instantly, and without effect; and while changing the discharged pistol for its companion, his opponent slowly brought his weapon to the present. *Three* might have been told before the trigger was drawn—a sudden shock, as if the touch of electricity, convulsed Phillips

for a moment—and tottering two paces forward he dropped before the second or surgeon could run to his assistance.

Unmoved, as if he had only fired at a tree, the avenger of the dead beauty retained his ground, while O'Brien joined those who supported the dying man. Dying he was, for the ball had passed through the lungs, and the immense hemorrhage it caused was already choking him. Phillips heard his doom pronounced and, with difficulty, expressed a wish that O'Connor should draw near. O'Brien beckoned to him, and the soldier came forward and stood

rushed in torrents from his mouth, and, with a choking gurgle, he fell back in his second's arms, and expired.

Perfectly unmoved at the assassin effort of his foeman, the soldier regarded the dead man attentively. "Ellen!" he said, "thy prophecy has indeed been singularly accomplished!— Though he fell upon the field of honour, *he died a felon!* Come, O'Brien, we'll leave him to these gentlemen, and send them assistance from the inn."

While his second replaced the pistols in their case, O'Connor politely bowed to Bouverie and the doctor, assumed his cloak, and left the field leaning on his second's arm. The carriage was in waiting; and before the rustics, alarmed by the shots, could comprehend the nature of the affair, the avenger of beauty was driven from the village, as fast as four horses could expedite his escape.

heard but



THE CONCLUSION.

He rushed into the field, and, foremost fighting, fell,'
BYRON.

The most precious tears are those with which Heaven
bedews the unburied head of a soldier.
GOLDSMITH.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study indicate that the use of a computer-based system for the management of a business is a viable alternative to the traditional paper-based system. The system is easy to use and can be used by non-technical staff. The system is also secure and can be used in a multi-user environment. The system is also flexible and can be adapted to the needs of different businesses. The system is also cost-effective and can be used on a wide range of hardware. The system is also easy to maintain and can be updated as the business grows. The system is also a good investment for businesses that want to improve their efficiency and reduce their costs.

CONCLUSION.

THE death of Phillips, it may be supposed occasioned a powerful sensation; and inquiries into the causes that produced his fatal meeting with Colonel O'Connor, displayed his character in its true light, and discovered the remorseless cruelty with which poor Mary had been sacrificed. While the memory of the dead *roué* was execrated by all, a deep sympathy was excited for his brave and unfortunate antagonist; and if general commiseration could sooth a wounded spirit, O'Connor might have felt its influence and been once more happy.

But a lacerated heart commonly rejects human consolation. O'Connor abruptly retired from the world—"Peace was proclaimed"—and the profession he once gloried in—robbed of its danger and excitement—had now no charms for him. He left the army, and buried himself in a deserted mansion-house which he found upon his estate—and that estate was situated in the remotest district of the wildest province of Ireland.

In the parsonage of Ashfield Mr. Howard passed the short and melancholy remnant of a virtuous and "noiseless life." He bowed with

great change, which should unite him to his lost child in another and a better existence.

And who was she who smoothed the pillow of declining age, and watched over infant orphanage? Ellen, the gipsy—who with a devotion that might have been better expected from a *religieuse*, than one of her wild and unsettled character, abandoned her wandering tribe, and took up her residence at Mr. Howard's. There her heart seemed fixed; and no mother cherished a first-born with more tenderness than she attended to her helpless charge. At stated times, O'Connor, “a melancholy man,” visited his *protégés*; and although in his intercourse with the good old vicar he assumed his accustomed serenity, at midnight when the villagers were sleeping, the soldier and the gipsy might have been found in the cemetery of Ashfield, beside the grave of her whom in life they had both loved so faithfully.

Months rolled on—Napoleon burst again

upon the world—the sceptre of a mighty nation was wrenched from the feeble grasp that held it—and Europe was once more in arms. O'Connell, in his wild retirement, for a few weeks watched calmly the progress of the mighty events then transacting on the continent. Gradually new objects interested—a new spirit was created—the feelings which circumstances had smothered for a season, were animated again—one engrossing passion returned—and he left his mountain home, repaired to the metropolis, and asked and obtained a regiment.

sharper roll of musketry, told plainly that the work of death had commenced.

From stragglers he obtained information where he should find his regiment; and a wounded soldier, whom he encountered tottering to the rear, confirmed it. The colonel galloped forward—wheeled, as he had been directed, to the left—and, as his regiment were forming for cavalry, rode into the square, and announced himself their commander. He was instantly recognised, and a hearty cheer welcomed him to the battle-ground.

With that glorious and bloody field we have no business, save to cursorily remark, that considering the force engaged, it was not second even to “immortal Waterloo.” O’Connor’s was one of the regiments most pressed; but, charge after charge the French cavalry were repulsed, and though sadly reduced in numbers, “few but fearless still,” it now awaited a threatened attack of infantry. It came. Steadily the diminished line, not covering half the

ground it did two hours before, received the fire of their assailants. A quick and murderous volley answered it. "Charge!" cried a voice that rose loud and clear above the roar of battle. The bayonets were levelled—the rush was mad—
—all gave way before it—but a straggling soldier struck the gallant leader—and O'Connor dropping from his saddle, "fighting foremost, fell.

Night came. That had been the last effort of Ney. It failed—and the French retired. The British held the battle-ground undisputed and at the foot of the pine-tree where he died, a grave was hastily turned up, and on the spot

It was on the tenth anniversary of that proud and bloody day, that a female, accompanied by two handsome boys, was seen kneeling at a little mound, which indicated that a departed warrior was sleeping beneath it. The woman was sinking into the vale of years, and her hair once of raven blackness, was thickly silvered by time and sorrow; but still the remains of beauty might be traced in features which had once been remarkable for their loveliness. The elder of the boys was apparently of Spanish lineage; and his olive complexion and dark brows formed a striking contrast to the fair skin and laughing blue eyes of his younger and handsomer companion. They remained till evening beside the grave; and, before they left the spot, hung a garland upon the branches of the pine-tree which shaded the ashes of the dead soldier.

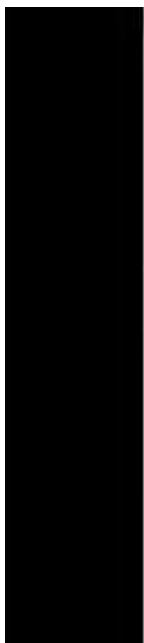
Five years passed—the anniversary of Quatre-Bras again arrived—and two youths, now verging upon manhood, were seen kneeling at the same mound. No female accompanied

them—and they were habited in deep mourning such as children wear to denote the loss of a parent. They were the orphan *protégés* of Colonel O'Connor, and their protectress was more. Ellen had paid the debt of nature—her wild and tameless spirit found repose when she found weary rest—her own mingled with her mother's ashes—and she slept beside that good being whom in life she loved so well—the victim of man's perfidy—Mary Howard.









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